Man in trespassing case gets six months in prison. PAGE 3
CNMI allocated $18.9M to address drinking water contaminants. PAGE 5

Hafa Adai!

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Saipan Tribune

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MHS wins mock trial anew

The Marianas High School mock trial team members pose for a photo after they were announced the winners of the 2023 return of the annual mock trial competition at the Guma' Hustisia held from Thursday, Feb. 16, to Friday, Feb. 17.
LEIGH GASES

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Marianas High School mock trial team successfully defended their crown as champions in the return of the annual mock trial competition at the Guma' Hustisia held over two days from Thursday, Feb. 16, to Friday, Feb. 17.

Their win gives the Dolphins to right to represent the CNMI at the National Mock Trial Competition in Little Rock, Arkansas from May 18 to 20, 2023.

Second place went to Saipan Southern High School and third place went to Dr. Rita Hocog Inos Jr.-Sr.

See MHS on Page 4

P-EBT distribution for NAP kids under 6 begins on Feb. 21

The Nutrition Assistance Program of the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, in conjunction with the Public School System Child Nutrition Program, is announcing the P-EBT distribution for children below 6 years old and are under the NAP program from August 2021 to May 2022.

The P-EBT distribution on Saipan will be issued based on their current regular NAP Case ID number. For example, if the NAP Case ID No. is B100011261, the last digit is one, hence you pick up your benefits on the first day.

See P-EBT on Page 4

Palacios

OF $254.3M AVAILABLE CDBG-DR FUNDS

'Wish list' of projects worth $680M submitted

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

From an initial $243.9 million allocation under the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery Program, to the allocation of a supplemental grant that boosted the final award to $254.3 million, the final amount was still unable to meet what was basically a "wish list" of projects government agencies applied for

See WISH on Page 4

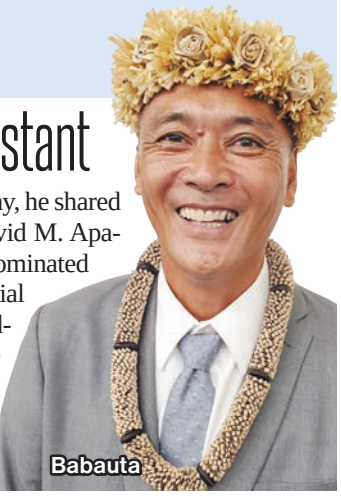
Franklin Babauta is HSEM special assistant

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
Kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Palacios-Apatang administration continues to fill critical Cabinet slots and recently named Franklin Babauta as the CNMI Homeland Security and Emergency Management special assistant.

In a brief interview with Gov. Arnold I. Palacios last Friday, he shared that he and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang have officially nominated Babauta as HSEM special assistant under their administration because of his extensive background in state and national security.

See HSEM on Page 4


Babauta

INSIDE

BUSINESS
Sea Shell Pink has opened a boutique shop on the first floor of the former Bank of Saipan.

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NATION
Former President Jimmy Carter, at 98 years old, has entered home hospice care in Georgia.

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LIFE & STYLE
Bruce Willis' family said his condition has worsened and he has now been diagnosed with dementia.

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UNITED STATES NOV. 4, 1986

Local

Yumul supports IRP application for a TAP grant

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Ray N. Yumul, in his capacity as Department of Public Works acting secretary, has expressed strong support for the CNMI Infrastructure and Recovery Program's application for a Technical Assistance Program grant from the Office of Insular Affairs.

Yumul

In a letter last Feb. 13 to Carmen Cantor, assistant secretary for Insular and International Affairs of the U.S. Department of the Interior's OIA, Yumul said that IRP has been instrumental in providing technical permitting assistance to complete government infrastructure and disaster recovery projects in the CNMI.

He said the TAP grant will enable the IRP to continue providing technical permitting assistance for government offices to complete the federal and local permitting requirements such as archaeological and biological assessments as well as construction monitoring for these projects.

Yumul said that, since IRP's inception, they have worked closely with the staff of DPW's Technical Services Division to ensure that various construction projects are progressing on time to meet grant requirements.

The acting DPS secretary said the CNMI has been facing significant challenges in the aftermath of several natural disasters that have severely damaged the infrastructure and economy of the region.

Yumul said that IRP has played a crucial role in supporting infrastructure development, providing the necessary technical and administrative support to complete infrastructure projects.

He said IRP has a proven track record of delivering results and has proven that they are dedicated to helping the DPW meet its project milestones and timeline.

"I am confident that with this grant, IRP will be able to continue their important work," Yumul said.

He added that his grant will help ensure that the CNMI can continue to make progress in its recovery efforts and build a stronger, more resilient future.

Former governor Ralph DLG Torres created the IRP in May 2021 to streamline the process and expedite federally-funded projects worth nearly a billion dollars for different government agencies.

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HEALTH FAIR

Maria Calma and Jaiden Sabugo, students of Northern Marianas College's nursing program, administer blood sugar tests at the recently-held NMC Nursing Club Health Fair. With the help of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s Health Disparities Program, CHCC Oral Health Program, CHCC Family Care Clinic, and the Department of Fire & Emergency Medical Services, the nursing students were able to promote health awareness and bring a variety of health resources to the community. The NMC Nursing Club would also like to extend their thanks to all of the organizations who participated and donated, including Bridge Capital, LLC, NMC's Office of Student Activities and Leadership, the CNMI Area Health Education Center, Office of the Mayor of Saipan, and NMC's Cooperative Research, Extension and Education Services. **NMC**

Man in trespassing case gets six months in prison

A man who was arrested for trespassing was sentenced to a term of imprisonment of six months, all suspended except for four months that he must serve without eligibility of parole, early release, or work release.

Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo sentenced Tyneth Santos Mariur to a six-month imprisonment term after pleading guilty to trespassing and pulling a blanket covering a woman who was sleeping in the early morning hours of Nov. 12, 2022.

Mariur, 19, has pleaded guilty to criminal trespass and disturbing the peace.

Govendo gave Mariur credit for the 86 days the defendant had already served since Nov. 12, 2022.

Mariur will be released from the custody of the Department of Corrections on March 24, 2023, at 8am.

After serving his sentence, Mariur will be placed on supervised probation for two years beginning on March 24, 2023.

According to the complaint against Mariur, Department of Public Safety officers responded to a call about an attempted rape in a residence in Chalan Kiya at around 4:11am last Nov. 12, 2022.

At the scene, the officers met with the victim who was in tears inside a car near her house.

She told police that she got home from work at around 10pm and went to bed. She said she left her door unlocked in case her boyfriend would come over.

At around 3am, she was awakened by someone pulling off her blanket.

She said when she looked up, she saw Mariur standing next to her by the bed and holding her blanket. She said she began screaming, stood up and asked him what he was doing there. She then ran to her car where she called her boyfriend and the police.

Mariur, who police said smelled heavily of alcohol, claimed that he heard someone at the back of his house so he went over to the victim's residence to ask the woman's boyfriend, a police officer, to help him look around for "stealers."

When no one responded to his knocks, Mariur said he entered the home and called for the woman's boyfriend from the living room. ***(Kimberly B. Esmores)***

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WEATHER ADVISORIES

High surf and rip currents today

A high surf advisory remains in effect until 6pm today, Monday, while a high risk of rip currents are present through this afternoon.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Guam and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, large breaking waves of 8 to 12 feet in the surf zone and dangerous rip currents are present in north- and east-facing reefs of the Marianas. These will create dangerous swimming and surfing conditions and localized beach erosion. Rip currents can sweep even the best swimmers away from shore into deeper water.

Inexperienced swimmers should remain out of the water due to dangerous surf conditions.

The public is reminded to stay out of the water along north- and east-facing reef lines. Swim near a lifeguard. If caught in a rip current, relax and float. Don't swim against the current. If able, swim in a direction following the shoreline. If unable to escape, face the shore and call or wave for help. ***(PR)***

Avoid sailing today

A small craft advisory remains in effect until 6pm today, Monday.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Guam and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, east winds of 15 to 20 knots, with gusts of up to 30 knots and seas 8 to 11 feet are present in Marianas coastal waters until 6pm . Conditions will be hazardous to small craft. Stronger winds gusting to 30 knots will be present before decreasing overnight.

Inexperienced mariners, especially those operating smaller vessels, should avoid boating in hazardous conditions. ***(PR)***

MHS

From Page 1

High School.

Present during the awards ceremony last Friday in the Guma' Hustisia's atrium were students and coaches from MHS, Saipan Southern High School, Dr. Rita Hocog Inos Jr.-Sr. High School, Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada, District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona, CNMI Supreme Court Associate Justice John A. Manglona, CNMI Supreme Court Associate Justice Perry B. Inos, Superior Court Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio, Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho, Superior Court Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja, and U.S. District Court magistrate judge Heather L. Kennedy

For the individual awards, MHS senior Mylan Goodwin bagged two wins as the best prosecution attorney and best defense attorney. She said after the competition that she was not expecting to win both categories and gave all the credit to her coaches and teammate Anastasia Shamanaeva, who has done mock trials with her for a long time.

MHS students Conall Hartig won best prosecution witness, while Jane Mozunder won best defense witness.

Marianas High School senior Mylan Goodwin, right, won best prosecution attorney and best defense attorney awards at the 2023 return of the annual mock trial competition at the Guma' Hustisia held from Thursday, Feb. 16 to Friday, Feb. 17. She is joined by her father, Timothy Goodwin, and mother, Tina Goodwin.

LEIGH GASES

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

P-EBT

From Page 1

The following is the schedule for the P-EBT issuance distribution:

Last Digit of Case No.	Date	Day
Case Record ID ending with 1 - 3	February 21, 2023	Tuesday
Case Record ID ending with 4 - 7	February 22, 2023	Wednesday
Case Record ID ending with 8 - 0 (OPEN DAY)	February 23, 2023	Thursday

Benefits will be issued from 8am to 3pm daily during the scheduled dates of the P-EBT distribution. "Open Day" is the designated date for households who were not able to pick up their benefits on their scheduled date. Households are advised to follow the schedule accordingly.

P-EBT benefits will be issued via drive-thru at the NAP office grounds in As Lito. To ensure a smooth process, households will be required to follow the traffic flow of the drive-thru procedure.

Each eligible child will receive a value of $8.28 per day. Each month that the child was in the program is equivalent to 2.4 days. For example, if a child was in the program from August 2021 to May 2022, which is 10 months, that is equivalent to 24 days (2.4 days x 10 months = 24 days) $8.28 x 24 days = $199. The child will receive a total of $199, which is also the maximum benefit.

Identification will be required. Households will be required to provide a government-issued photo identification such as a driver's license, passport, municipal ID, U.S. permanent resident card, etc. The identity of the parent or legal guardian will be verified against the list of eligible households.

A separate distribution scheduled for Tinian and Rota will be facilitated by the DCCA offices on Tinian and Rota.

For those students who have not yet picked up their P-EBT Benefits last December 2022 distribution, they are also welcome to pick up their benefits during any day of our February 2023 P-EBT Drive-Thru Issuance.

For inquiries regarding about the P-EBT program, call the P-EBT Call Center at (670) 287-3063 or 3065. ***(DCCA/NAP)***

HSEM

From Page 1

"As we all know, we have had several major disasters and we have all seen the importance of the HSEM office and the critical role that it plays. It was a vacant position and we needed an individual with leadership background and we reviewed several applicants and the lieutenant governor and I believe that Franklin Babauta would be the best candidate for this role. He has background in public safety, in the military, he's got all that experience and he also has the academic accoutrements to lead this department," he said.

Babauta, the husband of Sen. Celina Babauta (D-Saipan), is a retired lieutenant colonel, with over 25 years of service in the U.S. Army, Army Reserves, and Guam National Guard. He has been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan and has served on peacekeeping missions in the Philippines, Malaysia, and Australia.

Babauta's service is highlighted by many awards throughout his military service, including a Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, and NATO Medal, to name a few.

Babauta is also a former teacher at the CNMI Public School System and a former police officer serving as the police sergeant and deputy commissioner for Administration.

The new HSEM special assistant graduated from the University of Guam with a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice and minored in Military Science.

Palacios also believes that Babauta is a great fit for the role because he is even-tempered, personable, but still stand firm in his passion to protect the CNMI.

"He's also a very patient and personable individual. He's no-nonsense and HSEM is a very critical department," Palacios said.

Prior to Babauta, Sen. Dennis Mendiola (R-Rota) served as HSEM special assistant under the Torres administration.

WISH

From Page 1

back in January 2019, according to the Northern Marianas Housing Corp.

NMHC Corporate director Jesse S. Palacios said the combined amounts of projects that CNMI government agencies applied for totaled $680 million.

He said the CNMI's CDBG-DR allocation was initially awarded $243,946,000 on Nov. 24, 2020, but this has since evolved and increased to the current $254,324,000 as a result of additional supplemental funding in the amount of $10,378,000 awarded by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in June 2019 to fund the CNMI's unmet needs.

Palacios discussed the CDBG-DR funds in NMHC's summary report submitted last Feb. 8 to Sen. Paul A. Manglona (Ind-Rota), who chairs the Senate Public Utilities, Transportation and Communications Committee, and Rep. Vicente S. Aldan (Ind-Saipan), who chairs the House of Representatives PUTC Committee. Manglona and Aldan held a joint PUTC hearing last Feb. 9 intended to obtain an update on the status of projects under the CDBG-DR grant agreement.

In his appearance before both committees, Palacios said that U.S. Public Laws 115-254 and 116-20 appropriated the sum of $243,946,000 in CDBG-DR funds to the CNMI for the purpose of addressing disaster recovery unmet needs following the onslaught of Typhoon Mangkhut on Sept. 10, 2018 and Super Typhoon Yutu on Oct. 24, 2018.

HUD approved NMHC's CDBG-DR action plan on Oct. 4, 2020, and subsequently inked the grant agreement on Nov. 24, 2020, officially awarding the sum of $243.95 million in CDBG-DR funds to the CNMI.

Palacios said that no less than $195,157,000 of the total $243.9 million must be spent for recovery in the HUD-identified "most impacted and distressed," or MID, areas. HUD identified Saipan and Tinian as MID areas.

Palacios said the CNMI, through NMHC, has six years from the date of execution of the grant agreement to spend these funds.

Upon execution of the CDBG-DR grant agreement, the CNMI was awarded the sum of $243.9 million and allocated to fund eligible activities—housing (46%), infrastructure (43%), economic revitalization (4%), planning (2%), and administration (5%).

With the supplemental $10.3-million funding awarded by HUD, Palacios said the NMHC board of directors approved the management's recommendation to increase the CDBG-DR housing program's allocation by $9,859,100 and administration by $518,900.

In response to Sen. Celina R. Babauta's (D-Saipan) questions during the Feb. 9 joint PUTC hearing, NMHC deputy corporate director Zenie P. Mafnas disclosed that all government agencies applied for CDBG-DR funding in January 2019.

Mafnas said the submissions were not so much only for damaged facilities, but basically a wish list as well.

"I don't remember the actual counts, but as far as dollar value, about $680 million worth of projects were submitted," she said.

Mafnas said as not all projects were CDBG-DR-eligible, so they had to vet the whole list. She said when they finally got the allocation amount of $243 million, that's when they went back again and asked these agencies to narrow down their list. She said the list was based on the top priority submissions of these agencies.

"It became a wish list to top 15, to top 10, to top 5, to top 3. What are your priorities. Because we cannot tell an agency—we cannot tell CUC what's their priority. We cannot tell Tinian what their priorities are," Mafnas said.

NMHC CDBG-DR program manager Kimo Rosario said they don't tell the agencies apply, but they encouraged them to apply because they need to spend the money within the six-year period.

"They submit their applications, we reviewed them and we determined whether the activities are eligible or ineligible. But as far as prioritization, it is the onus of the applying agency," Rosario said.

He said they don't judge the application as they just reviewed them to ensure that they meet stringent grant requirements, and notified them.

CNMI allocated $18.9M to address drinking water contaminants

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI will be allocated $18.9 million from a grant program to address emerging contaminants, like Per-and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances in drinking water in the states and territories.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) disclosed in his e-*kilili* newsletter over the weekend that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced Monday that $18,914,000 will be allocated to the Commonwealth for the Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities grant program.

Sablan

The funding is made available from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which provides $5 billion in five years to address emerging contaminants like PFAS in public drinking water systems across the country, including the Marianas.

EPA administrator Michael S. Regan said this investment, which is allocated to states and territories, will be made available to communities as grants through EPA's Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities Grant Program and will promote access to safe and clean water in small, rural, and disadvantaged communities while supporting local economies.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law invests $5 billion over five years to help communities reduce PFAS in drinking water.

Sablan said this initial funding allotment is for fiscal years 2022 and 2023.

Sablan said grant funding can be used to prioritize infrastructure and source water treatment for pollutants, like PFAS and other emerging contaminants, to conduct water quality testing, and install necessary treatment solutions.

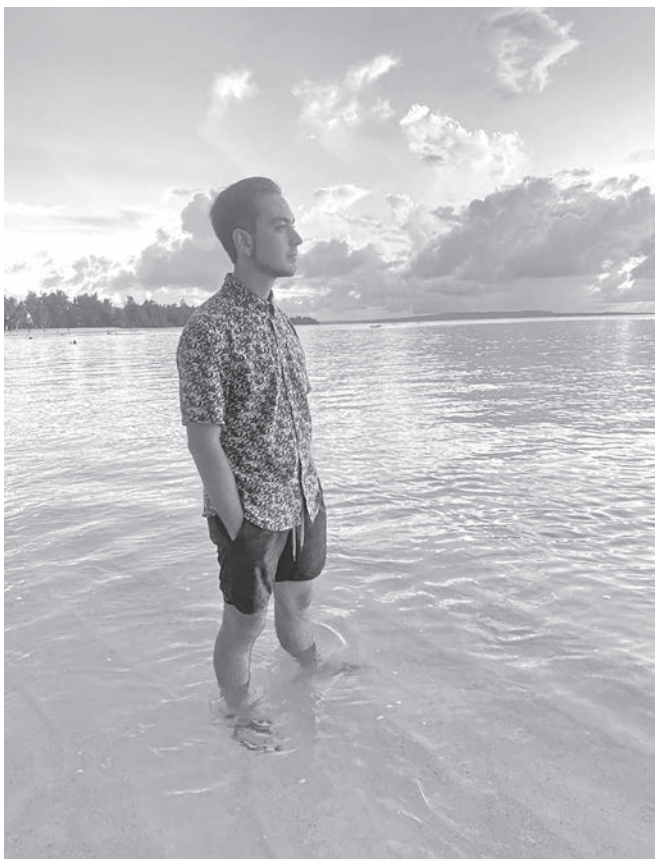
PFAS, a toxic class of chemicals linked to cancer and infertility, has created significant public health challenges across the country. PFAS chemicals have been commonly used because of their ability to repel oil and water and can be found in many items including nonstick products, paints, stains, cleaning products, food packaging, and firefighting foams.

In 2019, the CNMI government sued eight companies for allegedly making chemicals that later contaminated the CNMI's drinking water and pose a threat to public health, the environment, and natural resources of water.

Resident artist seeks to share lyric skills

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

Seeking to help people learn the fundamentals of songwriting, music artist and lyricist Jordan "Paradise" Ruiz is starting up tutoring lessons focusing mainly in that field and he hopes that others may learn the art and experience the therapy that songwriting can bring.


Music artist and lyricist Jordan "Paradise" Ruiz is starting up tutoring lessons as he seeks to help people learn the fundamentals of songwriting.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

As a substitute teacher at Saipan Community School, teaching is nothing new to Ruiz, but when it comes to teaching others about songwriting, Ruiz explained: "I just think it's [songwriting] a healthy release for things we have stuck in our heads, our minds. And I think that it's a good avenue for kids to get into because, when they have it at a young age, it's always a tool they can use once they grow up and mature. So [songwriting is] just planting a seed for them for their minds, and having that way to get rid of the stress that they have on their chest and their minds."

Ruiz originally lived in California, and first visited Saipan in 2017. Shortly after graduating from high school, he and his family relocated to Saipan to be with their family. He has been writing songs for five years, but just recently he began recording and releasing his music on music streaming platforms. Growing up, he was influenced through the music of several artists such as Kendrick Lamar, Eminem, Joyner Lucas and especially Mac Miller. "I just noticed how they struck my emotions and I related so much in the way it impacted me. And as I grew up, I realized that if I could make music like that, make awesome lyrics with heart-driven words and ideas, that it could impact someone else like that across the world too."

When it came to his personal music career, Ruiz said his personal musical journey isn't to get a million fans but rather to impact a million lives. "I'm more about the impact. I'm not trying to have a huge fan base that surpasses everyone else—that'll be cool but it's not really the goal. At the end of the day I want to make a difference."

Nowadays with certain music often pushing toxic ideologies, he hopes to be a positive artist for the youth. "…at the end of the day if we do what we can to be positive toward them, and show them the right way instead of the wrong way, it's bound to have a greater impact than the negative stuff that just pulls them down into ruts that they shouldn't even be in in the first place."

To contact Ruiz for tutoring sessions, reach out to him on Instagram @jordanparadisemusic, or https://instagram.com/jordanparadisemusic?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y= or call (670)588-3800. You may also find him on Facebook; search Jordan Ruiz or https://www.facebook.com/jordan.ruiz.790?mibextid=LQQJ4d.

To listen to his music, you can find him on YouTube: @jordanparadisemusic5922 or search Jordan Paradise on all music streaming platforms. Paradise's new song, "Second Chance," was released yesterday.

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JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 02-2023

Opening date: February 20, 2023 Closing date: March 10, 2023

Location: SAIPAN		SALARY
Position(s):	(1) ARFF General Maintenance I	PL 3/1 to 3/12 ($8.01/hr. to $13.70/hr.)
	(1) ARFF Mechanic II	PL 6/1 to 6/12 ($9.27/hr. to $15.85/hr.)
	(1) Lease Compliance Assistant	PL 14/1 to 14/12 ($13.70/hr. to $23.42/hr.)
	(1) Information Systems Specialist	PL 15/1 to 15/12 ($14.38/hr. to $24.60/hr.)
Location: PORT OF SAIPAN		SALARY
Position(s):	(2) Vessel Traffic Controller	PL 4/1 to 4/12 ($8.41/hr. to $14.38/hr.)
Location: TINIAN		SALARY
Position(s):	(1) AOA Controller/Ground Maintenance-I	PL 5/1 to 5/12 ($8.83/hr. to $15.10/hr.)
	(1) Radio Operator/Weather Observer	PL 7/1 to 7/12 ($9.73/hr. to $16.65/hr.)
	(1) Custodial-I	PL 1/1 to 1/12 ($7.26/hr. to $12.42/hr.)

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Detailed information on qualifications and position descriptions for the above positions may be picked up along with the application form from Monday-Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., except on holidays, at the CPA Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Arrival Terminal or CPA Admin. Office at the Tinian International Airport or at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport. For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at lorna.robert@cnmiports.com and hrspecialist@cnmiports.com or by phone at (670)237-6500.

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CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FUNDS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2023

THIS ADVERTISEMENT IS PAID FOR BY NMHC WITH CPD FUNDS.

The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, through the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) is announcing the availability of an estimated $1,576,020.00 in Community Planning and Development (CPD) funds available from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. NMHC anticipates receiving an estimated amount of $980,125.00 in Community Development Block Grants (CDBG); $515,489.00 in Home Investment Partnerships (HOME); and, $80,406.00 in Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds for Program Year (PY) 2023.

The CDBG funds, authorized under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, may be used for a wide range of community development activities to revitalize neighborhoods, provide affordable housing, expand economic opportunities, and improve community facilities and services. However, use of these funds must meet at least one of the national objectives which include: 1) to benefit low and moderate-income families; 2) to eliminate slum or blight conditions; or 3) to meet other urgent community development needs.

The CDBG program requires a grant recipient to certify that it will minimize displacement of persons as a result of activities assisted with CDBG funds. The CNMI government does not plan on undertaking any activity which will cause displacement of person. In the event of any unforeseen displacement resulting from any CDBG funded activity, the CNMI government will comply with the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, its implementing regulation and applicable local law.

HOME funds may be used to create affordable housing through financing assistance, site acquisition or improvement, and rehabilitating existing residential dwellings as well as providing funds for new construction or purchase of a single-family residential dwelling. Use of HOME funds must benefit low-income families.

ESG funds may be used to rehabilitate or convert to buildings into homeless shelters and for shelter operating expenses, supportive services and homeless prevention and rapid re-housing activities. Use of ESG funds must benefit the homeless.

Applications for the use of CPD funds are available for pick up at the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) located in Garapan, Saipan; San Jose Village, Tinian; and, Songsong Village, Rota, beginning December 19, 2022.

You may also obtain the application online at www.nmhcgov.net in the section titled "Public Notice/Announcement" subsection "Community Planning Development"

Applications must be submitted to the NMHC Offices in Garapan, Saipan (Saipan Residents); San Jose, Tinian (Tinian Residents); and, Songsong Village, Rota (Rota Residents) by **March 20, 2023, no later than 4:30 p.m. Applications submitted after March 20, 2023, will not be accepted.**

A briefing will be conducted for interested applicants and for those applicants who have picked up an application for the use of CPD funds. The briefing will address the program requirements and regulations concerning the usage of CPD funds.

The schedules for briefing are as follows:

February 13, 2023, 6:00 p.m. for the island of Saipan
February 14, 2023, 6:00 p.m. for the island of Tinian
February 16, 2023 6:00 p.m. for the island of Rota

We are encouraging all non-profit, for profit, and government service providers who are providing services to people with disabilities, homeless individuals, and emergency shelter administrators and operators to attend this briefing.

For residents living on the island of Saipan, the briefing will held at the NMHC Office in Garapan; Residents living on the island of Tinian, the briefing will be held at the NMHC Office at the NMC Campus, Building A; and Residents living on the island of Rota, the briefing will be held at the Rota Mayor's Office Conference Room in Tatachog.

Accommodations for disabled individuals or other non-English speaking individuals who wish to attend the briefing are available upon request by giving at least 24 hours notice prior to the meeting so that such needs can be arranged and provided. Additional inquiries, concerning the CPD program, may be directed to Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director or Ms. Tricia Tenorio, Planner at 234-6866 or 234-9447.

/s/
Jesse S. Palacios
Corporate Director

Micronesian leaders make gender equality a priority

The Micronesian region will be the first in the Pacific to develop a regional gender equality framework after the endorsement by leaders at the 25th Micronesian Islands Forum in Pohnpei.

The recommendation was first proposed by the MIF Gender Equality Committee, which was set up after the 24th MIF in 2018 to push gender equality efforts across the North Pacific.

Leaders also committed to more intentional efforts to mainstream gender-based work into sectoral areas such as energy, maritime, and agriculture.

A concerted effort to mobilize resources to push these outcomes into effect will also be done in the coming two years.

Stuard Penias, who chairs the MIF Gender Equality Committee and the Federated States of Micronesia Assistant-Secretary for Social Affairs, has championed this work with member states.

"Endorsing the development of a Micronesian Gender Equality Framework would be a strong step in the right direction. It will elevate the visibility and commitment of Micronesia to principles that we aspire to as a collective, regionally and internationally. We have come a long way, we have done a lot, we still have more to do in order to achieve gender parity. Gender equality is central to realizing our collective vision for a safe, secure, resilient, inclusive and peaceful Micronesian region," Penias said.

The Gender Equality Committee of the Micronesian Islands Forum. SPC

Mereseini Rakuita, the SPC's Principal Strategic Lead of Pacific Women and Girls, has provided technical advisory support to the MIF Gender Equality Committee and congratulates the Micronesian members for their transformative action on gender equality in the 25th MIF.

"The endorsement of the Micronesian Gender Equality Framework is a strong statement by Micronesian leaders speaking to the critical role that gender equality plays in nation building. SPC looks forward to working closely with the region in developing this piece of work over the next two years," said Rakuita.

The development of the framework will include diverse and broad stakeholder engagement and consultation across the Micronesian region inclusive of communities, civil society, government, development partners and technical agencies.

The Micronesia Gender Equality Framework will be developed over the next 24-months and presented to Micronesian Leaders at the 26th Micronesia Islands Forum in 2025.

Congratulations also to FSM Department of Health and Social Affairs under the leadership of Secretary Marcus Samo for an excellent job in guiding the work of the Committee to a successful conclusion.

The 25th MIF is currently being held in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia. The purpose of the meeting is to reaffirm relationships and discuss and establish regional cooperation on a variety of issues that are of mutual concern to the subregion.

This annual summit brings together the six governors and three presidents of the Micronesia region, as well as policy representatives from the CNMI, Guam, Palau, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia and its members states of Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei and Yap. Nauru has been confirmed in this meeting as an official Micronesian Islands Forum Member.

■ **Countries represented**: Republic of the Marshall Islands, Republic of Palau, Federated States of Micronesia

■ **Governors represented**: Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, governors of Chuuk, Yap, Kosrae and Pohnpei (Federated States of Micronesia).

Background on MIF Gender Equality Committee

Leaders endorsed the establishment of the Gender equality committee in 2019 in Chuuk, FSM at the 23rd Micronesia Islands Forum.

The proposal to establish the committee in 2019 was proposed by the Republic of the Marshall Islands and it was recognized by MIF leaders that this was important to have its own committee to report progress, challenges and priorities in how to drive gender equality in meaningful ways in the North Pacific region.

Leaders have endorsed:

1. The development of a Micronesian regional gender equality framework.
2. To mainstream gender into sectoral work
3. To mobilize resources to effect these outcomes ***(PR)***

UOG builds ties with National Museum of Taiwan Literature

University of Guam officials signed a memorandum of understanding with the National Museum of Taiwan Literature on Jan. 11, 2023, in Taipei. From left, Kuan-Ju Chen, senior liaison of the Asia Pacific Universities Consortium at UOG; director Nikki Lin, National Museum of Taiwan Literature; UOG senior vice president and provost Anita Borja Enriquez; and director Carlos Taitano of the UOG Global Learning & Engagement Department. UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

The University of Guam established ties with the National Museum of Taiwan Literature through a memorandum of understanding on Jan. 11, 2023.

The partnership aims to continue to build stronger relations between the University and Taiwan institutions and promote exchanges of cultural and educational activities.

UOG senior vice president and provost Anita Borja Enriquez and director Carlos Taitano of the Global Learning & Engagement Department visited Taiwan for the signing with the museum's director, Nikki Lin.

They were joined by Kuan-Ju Chen, assistant professor of agricultural economics and the senior liaison of the Asia Pacific Universities Consortium for UOG.

The MOU will be followed by preparations to hold an exhibit in Guam, sometime in June 2023, to feature Austronesian artwork in a UOG partnership with the Taiwan museum and National Taitung University.

"Through the collaborative work between UOG and the Taiwan Economic and Cultural Office in Guam, we will continue to facilitate cultural and educational activities and build the connections between our two islands," said Enriquez.

The exhibit will feature indigenous cultures in the form of literature, handmade products, sculptures, and photography among various forms of artwork.

"By working with our partners in Taiwan, we hope to foster and deepen our understanding of Austronesian culture and learning of diversity in the arts," said Chen.

The UOG delegation also visited some of its sister universities in Taiwan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs office, and the headquarters of Honhui Group which is a major real estate investor in Guam. ***(UOG)***

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

NMHC hereby publicly discloses that on Monday, January 31, 2021, Ramon B. Camacho dba Camacho Rental, is Mayor-Elect for Municipality of Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, applied for assistance under the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster (CDBG-DR) Affordable Rental Housing Development Program.

Said applicant has been determined to be a member of a group or class of low-income persons intended to be beneficiaries of the assisted activity and is applying to receive generally the same benefits being made available to the group or class. Mr. Ramon B. Camacho is not and shall not be involved in the handling of this loan application.

NMHC discloses this possible conflict pursuant to 24 CFR § 92.356 in order to allow any interested persons to comment before the application is considered for an exception under the applicable conflict regulations.

Any comments should be submitted to NMHC on or before Tuesday, February 21, 2023.

Dated this 6th day of February, 2023.

/s/
JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

ROBERT T. TORRES
ATTORNEY AT LAW
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
P.O. Box 500730 CK, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 234-7859 | Facsimile: (670) 234-5749

Attorney for Petitioner Carl J. Castro

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF DOLORES G. CASTRO, Decedent. : CIVIL ACTION NO. 23-0020 : NOTICE OF HEARING AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS : DATE: MARCH 2, 2023 : TIME: 10:00 A.M. : JUDGE: Honorable Joseph N. Camacho

TO: THE GENERAL PUBLIC, ANY HEIRS, CLAIMANTS, OR CREDITORS OF THE LATE DOLORES G. CASTRO OR HER ESTATE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that **CARL J. CASTRO** has petitioned the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to issue a Verified Petition to Admit Estate into Probate and Appointment of Administrator for the Estate of Dolores G. Castro the decedent. The proposed Administrator is Carol J. Castro The Attorney for the Petitioner is Robert T. Torres, Attorney at Law, whose address is 5960 Plata Drive P.O. Box 500730, Saipan MP 96950.

The hearing on the Petition is scheduled to be heard on the date and at the time set forth above at the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All interested persons or entities should appear at this hearing. Any and all persons, creditors, or entities having claims against the deceased or his Estate are hereby required by law to file their claims with the Clerk of Court within sixty (60) days of this publication or the claim(s) will be baited. A copy of your claim should also be sent to the attorney for Petitioner, **ROBERT T. TORRES, Attorney at Law**, at the address above indicated.

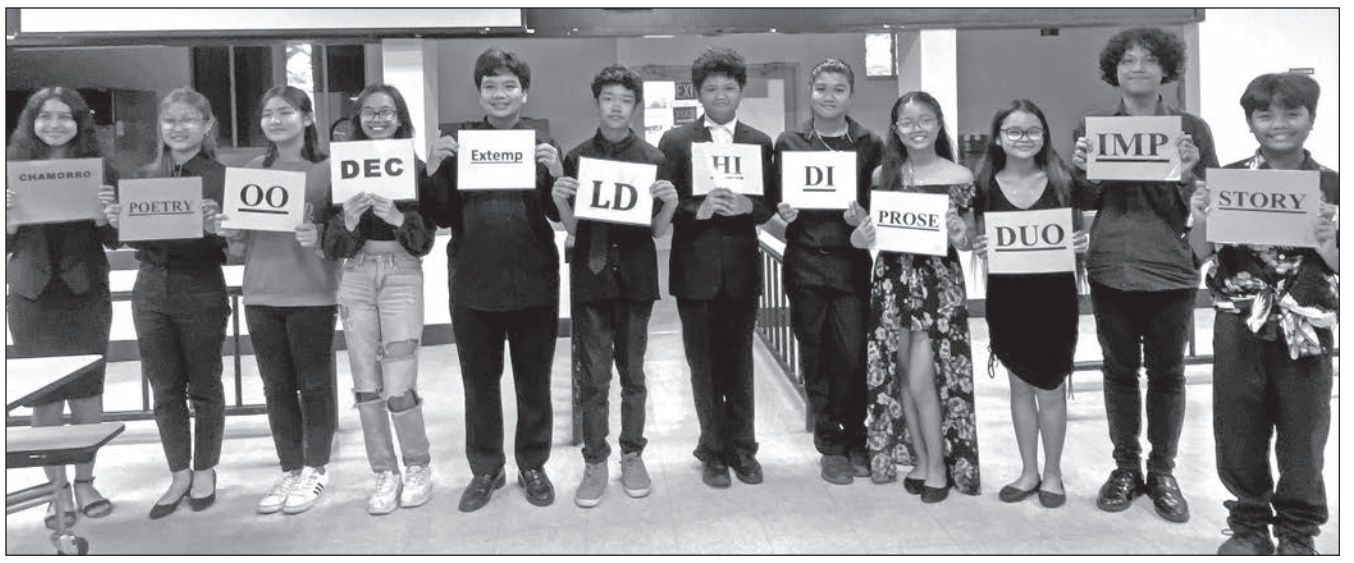
Dated this 7th day of February 2023.

/s/_____
Clerk of Court/ Deputy Clerk of Court

NJSDA announces winners and members of national team

Students from various public and private middle schools on Saipan pose for a photo after their National Junior Speech and Debate Association regional finals last Feb. 11, 2023, at the Hopwood Middle School cafeteria.

LEIGH GASES



The 13-member CNMI national team—from left, Iris Maleia Rasa, Joan Song, Celine Park, Denilyn Jacoba, Edwin Sibucao Jr., Cedric Catacutan, Seano Pangilinan, Jim Leonard Sison, Paula Surima, Lurlene Odal, (Princess Rigua not pictured), George Vinuya, and Gian Antonio—will represent the CNMI in the first face-to-face National Junior Speech and Debate Association competition since the COVID-19 pandemic, in Mesa, Arizona from June 13 to June 16, 2023.

LEIGH GASES

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The National Junior Speech and Debate Association announced its regional finals winners along with its 13-member national team last Feb. 11, 2023, at the Hopwood Middle School cafeteria.

The national team will represent the CNMI in the National Speech and Debate Association's Middle School National Tournament in June. The national competition will resume its first face-to-face competition since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and will take place in Mesa, Arizona from June 13 to June 16, 2023.

The 13 middle school students from four different public and private schools on Saipan that will represent the CNMI are:

■ Princess Rigua and Lurlene Odal from Hopwood Middle School, who will compete in the Duo Interpretation category.

■ Cedric Catacutan from Francisco M. Sablan Middle School, who will represent the team in the Lincoln Douglas Debate.

■ In the Declamation portion, Denilyn Jacoba from FMS will take the stage.

■ Seano Pangilinan from HMS will compete in the Humorous Interpretation.

■ Jim Leonard Sison from HMS will compete in Dramatic Interpretation.

■ Celine Park from Saipan Community School will compete in Original Oratory.

■ Iris Maleia Rasa from Mount Carmel School will compete in CCLHS - Chamorro Speaking.

■ Paula Surima from HMS will compete in the Prose competition.

■ Joan Song from SCS will compete in Poetry.

■ Edwin Sibucao Jr. from FMS will compete in Extemporaneous Speaking.

■ George Vinuya from FMS will compete in Impromptu.

■ Gian Antonio from FMS will compete in Storytelling.

In the regional finals held before the national team was announced, Lincoln Douglas Debate winners from first place to fifth place were Cedric Catacutan, Xyris Eliazar, Boying Lin, Denilyn Jacoba, and Precious Lontoc.

Duo Interpretation winners from first place to seventh place were Princess Rigua and Lurlene Odal; Seano Pangilinan and Jim Leonard Sison; Michael Elayda and Alexander Javier; Joan Song and David Park; Yu Rong Jian and Gian Antonio; Kalie Kalen and Xyris Eliazar; and Hyacinth Gail Lobo and Mary Razielle Sobremisana.

Humorous Interpretation winners from first place to fifth place were Seano Pangilinan, George Vinuya, Breanna May Lopez, Alyana Rotap, and Joshua Yoo.

Dramatic Interpretation winners from first place to eighth place were Lurlene Odal; Jim Leonard Sison; Gian Antonio; Paula Surima; Breanna May Lopez; Paul Jacoba; Riani Sablan; and Paula Bernardo.

Original Oratory winners from first place to sixth were Celine Park, Chan Woo (Henry) Yeom, Marilet Tuazon, Fiona Zhu, Sarah Melchor, and Aron Blancia.

CCLHS - Chamorro Speaking winners from first place to fourth were Iris Maleia Rasa, Ha'ane Manibusan, Kalie Kalen, and Hanna Padolino.

Prose winners from first place to sixth were Paula Surima, Princess Rigua, Jim Leonard Sison, Qihan Wang, Iris Maleia Rasa, and Alyana Rotap.

Poetry winners from first place to sixth were Joan Song, Seano Pangilinan, Celine Park, Carly Dela Cruz, Josephine Lopez, and Alexis Salundaguit.

Extemporaneous Speaking winners from first place to sixth were Edwin Sibucao Jr., Hans Gabriel Ordas, Austin Yumul, Jose Jeffrey Bonto, Alexander Javier, and Fiona Zhu.

Declamation winners from first place to sixth were Denilyn Jacoba, Louise Manansala, Cedric Catacutan, Edwin Sibucao Jr., Marilet Tuazon, and Alexis Salundaguit.

Impromptu winners from first place to seventh were George Vinuya, Qihan Wang, Edwin Sibucao Jr., Joshua Yoo, Celine Park, Louise Manansala, and Victor Neil Santos.

Storytelling winners from first place to sixth were Gian Antonio, Qihan Wang, Yu Rong Jian, Alexis Salundaguit, Princess Rigua, and Cedric Catacutan.

Harold Easton, a key organizer of the regional events, said the students have been preparing for the competition since last October and that every student and team earned their win. "The general impression of the judges was that they were impressed. Obviously, some were better than others, but that's the nature of the competition," he said.

The students competed in three competitions prior to the final competition, to which they then qualified to reach the regional finals.

Since 1999, the CNMI has been participating in the National Speech and Debate Association competitions, which usually feature more than 6,000 middle and high school students every summer.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

JKPL closed today and tomorrow

Because today's President's Day holiday falls on a normal library closure day, Monday, the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library will also be closed on Tuesday, Feb, 21, 2023. The JKPL will resume normal operational hours on Wednesday, Feb. 22, 2023, at 10am. ***(PR)***

Write now, right now!

Come to the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library on Saturday, Feb. 25, 2023 from 10 am to 12 noon and join us for a write-in. This is an opportunity to write with others, side-by-side, in parallel inspiration and encouragement. Write your journal. Write your family history. Write your stories novels, poems or letters. We have so little indigenous written history, but it is not too late to start. There is no better way to leave a legacy of your experiences and life stories than through writing them down for future generations. Bring your notebooks and pens, or laptop or other writing device and write with us. ***(PR)***

Name: Baofang Li
Address: Saipan, MP 96950
Phone: (670) 285-7799

Pro Se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In Re the Matter of the Petition To Correct: D.L.E.Z.M.M Minor Child, By: Baofang Li Petitioner	:	FCD CN CIVIL ACTION NO. 22-0308 **NOTICE OF HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on March 6, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. in Courtroom 217A, before Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio.

Dated this 24th day of August, 2022.

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court
/s/
By: Deputy Clerk of Court

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

ACCOUNTANT: Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting (may be foreign equivalent). 60 months experience as an Accountant. Analyze business operations trends, cost, revenues, financial commitments, and obligations to project future revenues and expenses or to provide advices. Develop, implement modify and document recordkeeping and accounting systems, making use of current computer technology. Send resume to: H.K. PANGELINAN & ASSOCIATES LLC, Attn: Human Resources, P.O. Box 501531, Saipan, MP 96950.

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

MAIN OFFICE: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2ND FLOOR ARRIVAL BLDG.
PO BOX 501055 SAIPAN, MP 96950
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REVISED NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) hereby gives notice that a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Tuesday, February 21, 2023, at **2:00 p.m.** in the CPA Conference Room, second floor of the Captain George M. Fleming Building at the Port of Saipan on Saipan. The following items are on the agenda for the above-referenced meeting:

AGENDA

I. **PRELIMINARY MATTERS**
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes (December 22, 2022)

II. **PUBLIC COMMENT(S)**
III. **CORRESPONDENCES**
IV. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**
1. Financial Affairs Committee (with Grants and Internal Auditor Reports)
2. Airport Facilities Committee
3. Seaport Facilities Committee
4. Personnel Affairs Committee

V. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**
VI. **OLD BUSINESS:**
1. Request for Proposal for Owner Engineer Agent
2. CPA Employee Handbook
3. Drug Policy
4. Supervisor Evaluation

VII. **NEW BUSINESS:**
1. Desk Audit for All Management and Supervisory levels
2. No Smoking and Betelnut Chewing Policy
3. Board Resolution 2023-01: Honoring Roman T. Tudela as a Board Member
4. Board Resolution 2023-02: Appreciation for Airlines
5. Echo Dock
6. Rota Terminal & Transfer
7. Ricondo PFC Contract - Change Order
8. Supplemental Budget Request: Rota Tractor & Mower
9. Supplemental Budget Request: Rota Airport Roof Canopy Replacement Project, A&E Amendment 2

VIII. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**
• Legal Counsel Reports: Legal matters/Litigation

IX. **MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS**
X. **ADJOURNMENT**

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. A time limit may be imposed. Video Conferencing is also available via Zoom.
Zoom link: Zoom link: Meeting ID: 898 0318 0837 Passcode: 573227

KIMBERLYN KING-HINDS
Chairwoman, Board of Directors

February 08, 2023

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 35

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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Putin is relocating Ukrainian children to Russian 're-education' camps. It's tantamount to a war crime

One of Vladimir Putin's strategies during his brutal, illegal war in Ukraine has been to ensure that Russians only hear one version of reality. His.

This week, the world learned that he's also applying that tactic to Ukrainian children.

The Russian government has put thousands of Ukrainian children into what the Kremlin pitched as "recreation camps," but in actuality are re-education facilities aimed at Russifying the children with a pro-Moscow lens into Russian culture, history and society, according to a report released by Yale University and the Conflict Observatory, a program created by the State Department to document war crimes committed by Russian forces and their proxies in Ukraine.

The children are between 4 months and 17 years old. Some boys have been given military training, including instruction on driving trucks and handling firearms. Russia began taking Ukrainian children to the camps in February 2022, and as of January relocation of children to the facilities was still happening, according to the report.

Putin was already vulnerable to an array of war crime charges. In the Ukrainian town of Bucha, Ukrainian officials and witnesses found evidence of Russian troops carrying out summary executions of dozens of men in civilian clothes, some with hands tied behind their backs and gunshot wounds to their heads. In the southern city of Mariupol, Russian forces targeted and destroyed a maternity hospital.

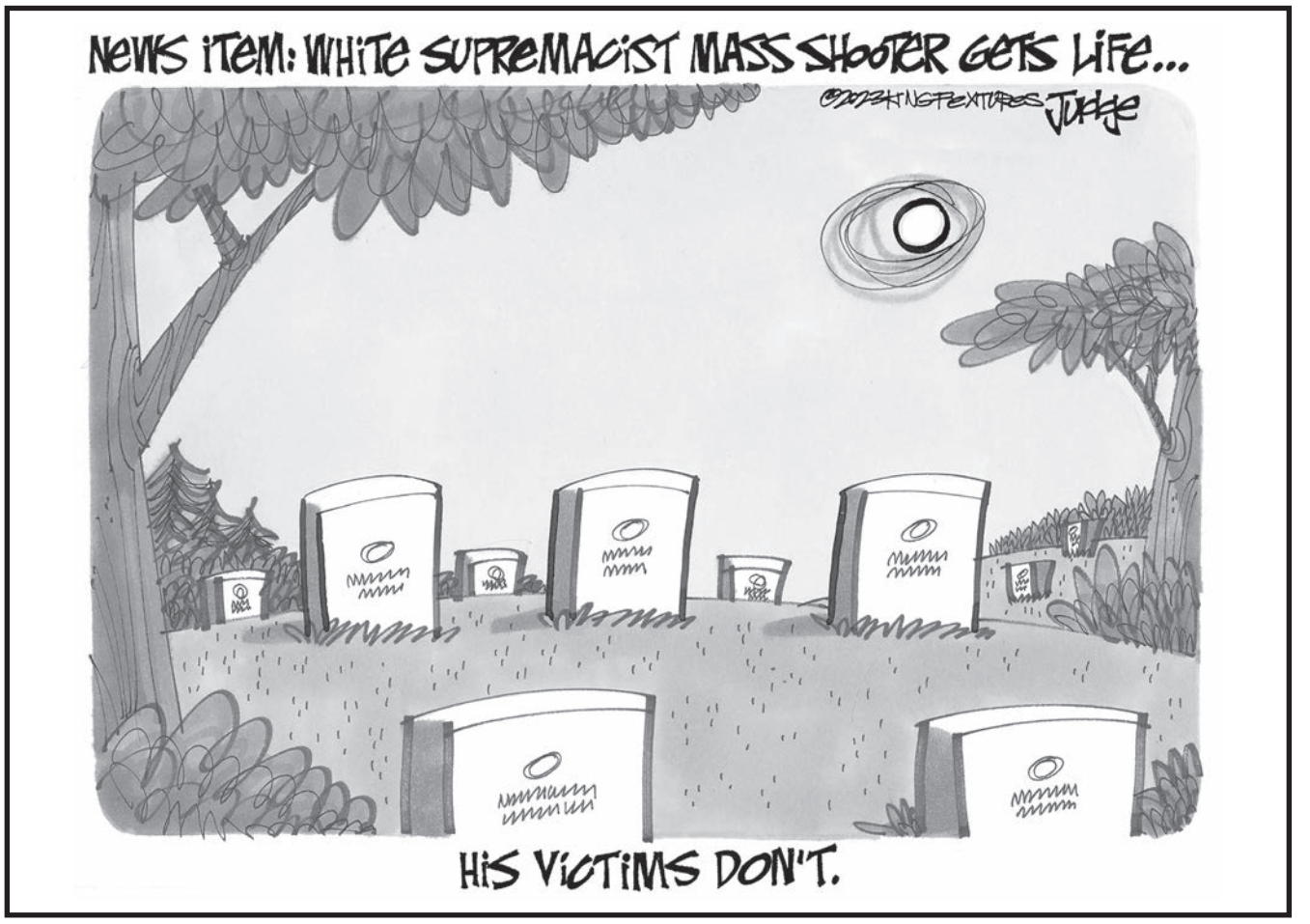
This latest inhuman act, however, is uniquely heinous. Putin is turning children into fodder for his own political ambitions.

Though the report documents at least 6,000 children being sent to camps, its authors estimate the numbers could be much higher. Camp locations span from Crimea, the Ukrainian province illegally annexed by Russia in 2014, to southern Russia and Siberia, including the Far East province of Magadan. That means Ukrainian children held at the Magadan camp are at least 3,900 miles away from their parents and relatives in Ukraine, as far away as London is from Chicago.

Circumstances behind the relocation of children to Russian camps vary. Some parents consented to handing over their children to Russian authorities, though the report states that often the consent was given under duress. Other children were taken from Ukrainian institutions and deported to Russia so they could be adopted by Russian families or placed in Russian foster care. Some children were returned to their parents after re-education, while others were never returned and their status remains unknown.

According to the report, Russia's actions could constitute a violation of the United Nations' Convention on the Rights

See PUTIN on Page 9



Vote the liars out, even if you agree with them

By STEPHEN L. CARTER
Bloomberg Opinion

Stephen L. Carter is a Bloomberg Opinion *columnist. A professor of law at Yale University, he is author, most recently, of* Invisible: The Story of the Black Woman Lawyer Who Took Down America's Most Powerful Mobster.

Much as we might complain about politicians lying, it's not the job of the government to fix the problem. That's the implication of last week's decision by a federal appellate court in a case involving a state law purporting to punish false attacks on candidates for public office. If the court is right—and I think it is—then only voters can exact a penalty for lying.

The dispute arose after a local prosecutor announced that a grand jury would be looking into an advertisement from North Carolina's 2020 race for attorney general. The ad in question, run by the incumbent, was alleged to violate a 90-year-old state law criminalizing "derogatory reports" about political candidates. The plaintiffs sought an injunction against the prosecutor's plan. Last week the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit ruled that the injunction should have been granted, because the law was almost certainly unconstitutional.

The court's thoughtful and comprehensive opinion is worth reading in full, for reasons I won't go into here. Suffice to say that in recent decades, the usual fate of statutes purporting to punish lies about political candidates is that they violate the First Amendment.

Political lies are a constant irritant in a democracy, but the courts are correct: The government shouldn't be involved in regulating the rough-and-tumble of political speech—whether false, true, or in between. Public officials who would suppress speech in the name of democracy, even when acting with the best of intentions, are in this sense the mirror image of those who would suppress votes.

Which is not to say that it's OK for candidates to lie. Lies are corrosive of democracy. Yet the incentives all run the wrong way. Some scholars argue that candidates are driven by the expectation that their opponents will lie. Another possibility is that given a relatively uninformed electorate, for the rational candidate lying is equilibrium behavior. But the truly depressing news is this: It's also possible that liars make better candidates.

Seriously.

A sobering 2020 study described an experiment in which several hundred mayors in Spain played a game in which lying would grant them an advantage. As one would expect, some mayors lied and others (the "lie averse") told the truth. Afterward, the researchers tracked the mayors' reelection campaigns, comparing the performance of those who lied in the game to who didn't. The study confirmed what most voters know and fear: Those who lied in the game enjoyed better election outcomes than the lie-averse.

The 4th Circuit was right to note that the U.S. Constitution leaves to the electoral process the task of reining in these tendencies. But this in turn creates two problems: First, we the people aren't good at spotting lies, in politics or elsewhere. Second, even if we were better at sorting the honest candidates from the liars, it's not clear we really want to.

Although most us probably think we're pretty good at spotting lies, most of us would be wrong. A 2006 meta-analysis of existing research found that when asked whether another person is lying, test subjects score just slightly better than random chance. (Ironically, scores improved when the speaker's face could not be seen.) These results hold true across a broad range of activities. Here's a particularly poignant example: Most parents do a poor job of judging whether their own children are lying.

If parents can't tell whether their kids are telling them fibs, it's hard to imagine that many voters can successfully weigh the veracity of political candidates. Here studies differ. One notable finding: Although voters who pay close attention do slightly better than random chance in determining whether a candidate for office is lying, research suggests the existence of a "truth bias"—meaning that observers are more likely to classify a politician's lie as truthful than the politician's truth as a lie. (The same research tells us that observers are more likely to catch lies by male than female candidates.)

All of which leads me to wonder: If it were possible to catch the liars, would we really want to? I'm skeptical. We live in a time when politics has grown so nationalized that even in local elections, voters often think more about Washington than about their communities. It's hard to find room in that heady and polarized mix for much concern about character. Small wonder that Americans think tolerance for lying in politics has gone up.

I've long argued that, when faced with candidates who lie and dissemble but are nevertheless with us on the issues, we should vote against them. Not stay home. Vote the other way. If we want a politics of integrity, even the most committed partisans should want the liars on their own side to be defeated. Losing elections is the only punishment politicians understand.

But we don't do that. I'm often told that it's not reasonable even to ask, because the issues are too important. Maybe so. But if what really matters is not a candidate's character but a candidate's reliable vote for "our" side, the incentive for politicians to tell the truth is arbitrarily close to zero.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

If you think the earthquake damage you see in Turkey can't happen here, think again

By LUCY JONES
Los Angeles Times

Lucy Jones is the founder of the Dr. Lucy Jones Center for Science and Society and the author of The Big Ones: How Natural Disasters Have Shaped Us (and What We Can Do About Them).

The images from Turkey and Syria in the last week show us just how devastating a major earthquake can be. When the magnitude 7.8 earthquake we expect on the San Andreas fault happens, we will also see death and destruction, perhaps not as extensive as seen in Turkey, but much worse than most people expect. Rather than the post-earthquake usable buildings many people think are guaranteed by the building code, the current code asks only that our buildings try not to collapse.

Office buildings, hospitals, apartments and homes are only as good as the building code that was in place at the time they were constructed and the degree to which that code was enforced. Problems with enforcement of the code in new construction and the lack of retrofitting of old, bad buildings will contribute to the California death toll when the next big earthquake comes. Efforts to overcome these failures are underway, and we can hope that more is done in time.

But a third, potentially catastrophic flaw in our building code is not being addressed. When it comes to earthquake safety, the current international code is intended solely to keep a building from killing someone while keeping the cost of construction as low as possible.

The code essentially says this: You can choose to build a structure that is so weak that it will be a total financial loss after an earthquake, as long as it doesn't kill someone. Engineers need a more concrete definition for "not killing someone," and that has become "avoid collapse."

This rule, called the life safety standard, is really just designed to make the probability of building collapse in an earthquake very low, less than 10% in the worst shaking expected. That sounds good, but put another way it means that no more than 10% of new buildings near a fault are expected to collapse when a big earthquake hits.

This is the code that has been used, if perhaps not fully enforced, in Turkey for the last 20 years. It is also the code in California and most of the United States.

Let's say the code works as planned in California and only a few new buildings collapse in a big earthquake—that doesn't mean other new buildings won't be so badly damaged that they will have to be torn down. When Christchurch, New Zealand, experienced a magnitude 6.2 earthquake in 2011—with shaking that was the maximum expected by its building code—only one modern building (the CTV building, built in 1986) collapsed, killing 115 people, but in addition 1,800 buildings were deemed unrepairable and were demolished. With a collapse rate much lower than 10%, the New Zealand structural engineers had done the job required of them by the code, but do we really think this is an acceptable outcome?

How many times do we need to see devastated cities and towns in other countries before we realize that this could be our future in California, Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Utah, Nevada, Missouri or any of the other seismically active parts of the United States?

Our engineers and scientists have developed standards for a "functional recovery" code—that is, a building code that aims to give us structures that can be repaired after a major temblor, whose function can be recovered. Needless to say, functional recovery is a safer standard for human survival as well as building survival.

Most estimates of the increased cost to build to the functional recovery standard add only about 1% to the cost of construction. An affordable housing complex, Casa Adelante, was just built in San Francisco, and its owners chose to design to a functional recovery standard. It was virtually cost-neutral compared with the original design for a life-safety building.

Two bills in the last five years proposing a statewide functional recovery standard for California have advanced through the Legislature only to eventually fail. We have chosen a future economic catastrophe rather than pay a little more now.

Our elected officials can ensure that we have buildings we can use after the earthquake. We should stop building buildings that may not kill us but that we know will have to be torn down after a big earthquake. Sacramento should give us what most of us thought we already had.

Time's up. The art of making a better exit

By RICHARD DAVIES
The Fulcrum

Richard Davies is a solutions journalist and podcast consultant. He co-hosts two bi-weekly podcasts: Let's Find Common Ground for commongroundcommittee.org, How Do We Fix It?

A lot of people I know are reading and chatting about a book with a very blunt title that was written by a wise 89-year-old woman from Sweden.

"The Gentle Swedish Art of Death Cleaning: How to Free Yourself and Your Family From a Lifetime of Clutter" is the title in the U.S. In Sweden they call it "Döstädning." In our society, where we are rather squeamish about discussing death, we might prefer to call this sensible practice "streamlining."

"Döstädning" means removing unnecessary stuff that you've collected over many years and making your home nice and orderly when you think the time is coming closer for you to leave the planet. Döstädning is a hot topic among the over 60s crowd—those we politely refer to as "senior citizens."

Death cleaning, or getting our affairs in order, makes perfect sense, and saves precious time for our loved ones when we are gone.

The book's author, Margareta Magnusson, writes with a dash of wry humor in a direct manner. Some of her prose is so lovely and wistful that there is a hint of poetry. Magnusson's next book, soon to be published here, is called "The Swedish Art of Aging Well: Life Wisdom From Someone Who Will (probably) Die Before You."

I plan to read that one as well.

Around here in Southeast Connecticut those who ignore Margareta Magnusson's advice sometimes fill me with sadness. Many old folks live alone and haven't moved in years. They occupy houses with attics and garages full of stuff. They never threw away their old rarely used possessions.

When we die we often leave it to those we love the most to perform the monumental, dreary task of finding a home or a dumpster for everything from our old armchairs and tables right down to thimbles, paper-clips and pins. We should start early, or in my case, now.

Myra, a dear old friend of mine in her mid-80's, died a couple of months ago. I called one of her sons the other day and asked: "How are you doing?" He told me a sad story. He loved his mom very much but sorting through all her stuff has been very hard. Especially the old photographs. "What do we throw away, what do we keep," he wondered. It has been emotional and exhausting.

Perhaps "Döstädning" should apply not only to our personal affairs, but public life too.

Far too many elected politicians are too slow to step away from their time in the sun and leave the stage. The problem is more pronounced in the U.S. than in many other nations, where perhaps more elected officials know that they have a life after politics. In November Charles Grassley of Iowa was re-elected to another six year term in the Senate. He is 89.

If President Joe Biden runs again next year—as he's expected to do—and wins a second term in the White House, he'll be 86 by the time he leaves office.

It's quite possible that in 2024 Biden will face former President Donald Trump (76) in a rematch. What a sorry prospect.

The elderly have a great deal of experience and wisdom but should they remain in highly demanding stressful jobs beyond their time? Baby boomers like me still have a lot to give (and write), but there should be time limits or term limits on those who hang around too long.

Last month, 82-year-old Nancy Pelosi had the good grace to step down as House speaker. In a recent interview with Maureen Dowd in The New York Times, Pelosi said that "It's just the time, and that's it. Upward and onward. I'm thrilled with the transition. I think it was beautiful."

Her daughter Alexandra, a documentary filmmaker, told Dowd that "my mother is at peak happiness. I've never seen her like this."

What a splendid exit. May the rest of us know when to face up to later years of our life with similar good grace.

PUTIN

From page 8

of a Child, a legally binding international pact on the treatment of children. Taking Ukrainian children for the purpose of permanent relocation in Russia, either through adoption or foster care, could constitute a war crime.

Even for children who have been returned to their parents, Putin has accomplished his goal of imprinting them with a Russified mindset. The report quoted one Russian official as saying, "all camps ... are aimed at patriotic education of youth, the development of communication skills and the preservation of cultural heritage." Russian patriotism, Russian education, Russian cultural heritage.

Filling children's heads with self-serving propaganda is far from a new tactic for Putin. In the 2000s, Russian teens co-opted into Putin's political youth movement, known as "Ours," would meet each summer at a camp at Lake Seliger outside Moscow for two weeks of sports and ideological indoctrination. The goal of "Ours" was clear: create the next generation of pro-Putin Russians.

Putin's exploitation of Ukrainian children is different, of course, because it's about creating a new generation that ascribes to the Russian leader's twisted belief that Ukraine should not exist, that it always has and always will belong to Russia.

Putin may claim he's saving these children by removing them from the theater of war. But that's patently wrong—he put Ukraine's children in harm's way by illegally invading their sovereign nation. He certainly did not think about children when he bombed the maternity hospital in Mariupol, or when Russian artillery shells rained on hundreds of Ukrainian schools.

We don't expect Putin to suddenly realize the indefensible depravity of his re-education camps. We do, however, expect the international community to hold the former KGB agent accountable when the time is right.

For the time being, the U.S. and NATO must focus on helping Ukraine win the war and preserve its sovereignty. At some point, though, the moment will come for the international community to judge the breadth and impact of this man's war crimes.

When that time arrives, Putin using Ukrainian children as pawns in his self-serving war should be integral to that assessment.

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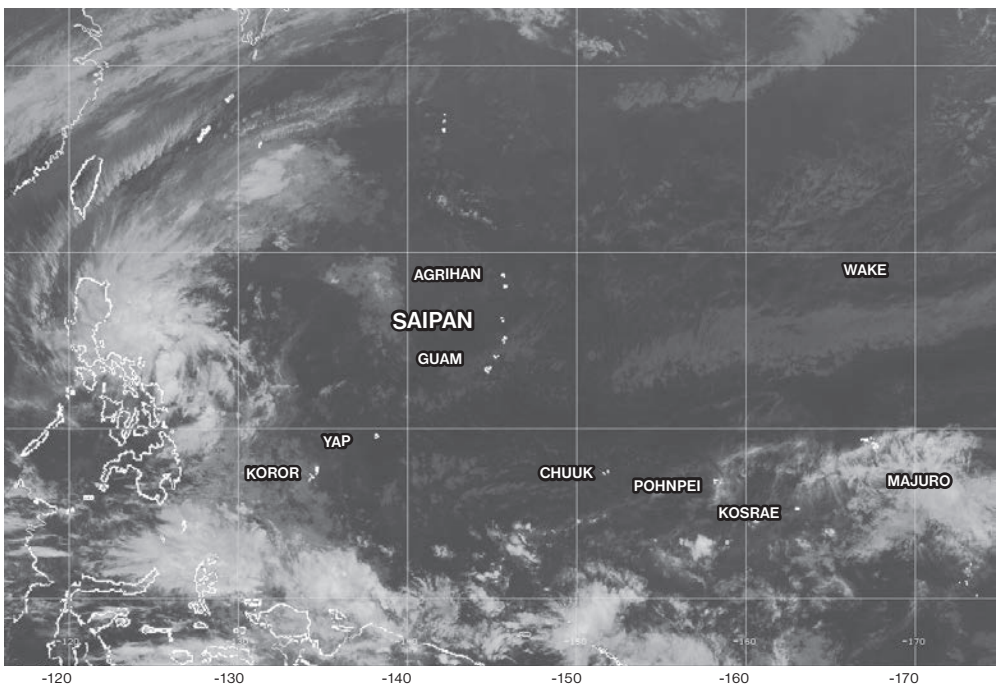
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Isolated showers. Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny
85º 76º	85º 76º	84º 75º	85º 74º	85º 74º

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 8:03 AM, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite and radar imagery indicates partly cloudy with isolated showers in the area. Fresh rends with occasional gusts up to strong. Altimetry has 11 to 13 feet off to our far east. Buoys show 10 to 11 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	85° / 76°
Palau	Partly Cloudy	83° / 75°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	85° / 79°
Chuuk	Mostly Sunny	85° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°
Majuro	Mostly Cloudy	83° / 79°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	77° / 61°
Beijing	Sunny	46° / 20°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	72° / 61°
Honolulu	Showers	79° / 71°
London	Showers	57° / 45°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	68° / 49°
Manila	Thunderstorms	89° / 76°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	76° / 63°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	79° / 71°
New York	Cloudy	51° / 45°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	50° / 35°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	55° / 38°
Busan	Mostly Sunny	50° / 27°
Rome	Partly Cloudy	63° / 46°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	65° / 45°
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	61° / 42°
Seoul	Sunny	37° / 20°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	53° / 36°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	59° / 45°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:39 AM	6:22 PM
Tuesday	6:39 AM	6:22 PM
Wednesday	6:38 AM	6:22 PM
Thursday	6:37 AM	6:23 PM
Friday	6:37 AM	6:23 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	6:34 AM	6:22 PM	-
Tuesday	7:22 AM	7:24 PM	-
Wednesday	8:05 AM	8:22 PM	-
Thursday	8:47 AM	9:18 PM	-
Friday	9:27 AM	10:13 PM	-

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
1:37 AM	Low Tide	-0.69
8:33 AM	High Tide	1.88
2:03 PM	Low Tide	0.93
7:13 PM	High Tide	2.00

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 1, 2023

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:30AM	7:25AM	Daily
UA193	7:55PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	8:00PM	9:50PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau
OZ624/701	3:50PM	10:35AM+1	3,6 via Incheon

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	3:15AM	6:55AM	1, 4, 5, 7
TW9308	3:50AM	7:20AM	1, 4, 5, 7
OZ624	3:50PM	7:40PM	3, 6
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:46AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA189	12:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA189/174	12:40AM	8:46AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
UA184/174	10:55PM	8:46AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA192/174	10:40PM	8:46AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
OZ704/623	11:50PM	2:20PM+1	2, 5 via Incheon

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ623	9:00AM	2:20PM	3, 6
7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily
TW307	8:45PM	2:15AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
TW9307	9:20PM	2:50AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

MARIANAS SOUTHERN AIRWAYS

INITIAL DAILY FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 13, 2023

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
11:20 A.M.	11:38 A.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
3:40 P.M.	3:58 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
9:40 A.M.	9:58 A.M.	6,7

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
12:00 P.M.	12:18 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
4:20 P.M.	4:38 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
10:20 A.M.	10:38 A.M.	6,7

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
7:20 A.M.	8:00 A.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
5:00 P.M.	5:40 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
7:40 A.M.	8:20 A.M.	6,7

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
10:20 A.M.	11:00 A.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
6:00 P.M.	6:40 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
8:40 A.M.	9:20 A.M.	6,7

SAIPAN TO GUAM

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
12:00 P.M.	1:00 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2:00 P.M.	3:00 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
7:00 P.M.	8:00 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
11:00 A.M.	12:00 P.M.	6,7

GUAM TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1:30 P.M.	2:30 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
5:30 P.M.	6:30 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
9:00 P.M.	10:00 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
12:30 P.M.	1:30 P.M.	6,7

ROTA TO GUAM

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
8:20 A.M.	8:55 A.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
4:25 P.M.	5:00 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

GUAM TO ROTA

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
9:25 A.M.	10:00 A.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
3:30 P.M.	4:05 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

Business

Sea Shell Pink opens boutique

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Sea Shell Pink has opened a boutique shop on the first floor of the former Bank of Saipan building in Garapan.

Head seamstress Mafe Ngalongalo said the new location is in the same building where the Sea Shell Pink tailoring shop is located.

Sea Shell Pink owner Hiroko Miyagawa decided to open a boutique store on Saipan last January following the closure of Sea Shell Pink in Guam's Agaña Shopping Center.

Ngalongalo said they were forced to shutter down the Guam boutique, which catered mostly to tourists in the U.S. territory as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The new boutique shares the same entrance as sister company and Japanese delicatessen Tokyo Mart Ex, which is also owned by Miyagawa.

Currently, Sea Shell Pink is offering a 30% discount on all its ready-to-wear aloha shirts and Hawaiian dresses in all prints and all sizes.

Ngalongalo said aside from the Hawaiian shirts and dresses prominently displayed inside the showroom, they still accept made-to-order and customized tailoring jobs. Labor is $25 for aloha shirts and $40 for Hawaiian dresses. Customers can either buy the fabric in-house (100% cotton, rayon, among others) or source it elsewhere. Made-to-order shirts and dresses can be made in as short as two days.

Aloha shirts and Hawaiian dresses are not the only items available at Sea Shell Pink, as Hawaiian bags and pretty soon bayong bags from the Philippines will be sold.

MARK RABAGO

Sea Shell Pink head seamstress Mafe Ngalongalo poses with one of her ready-to-wear Hawaiian dresses.

MARK RABAGO

Sea Shell Pink head seamstress Mafe Ngalongalo has over 40 years of tailoring experience. She's shown here posing with some of her tropical-themed bags.

A bayong is a bag made by weaving dried leaves.

Named after the best two words that represent the tropical paradise of Saipan (sea and shell) and Miyagawa's favorite color (pink), the tailoring shop was first opened on Saipan in 1982.

Before the Agaña Shopping Center location's abrupt closure, Sea Shell Pink exported their one-of-a-kind island dresses and shirts to Guam.

At its height, Sea Shell Pink exported twice a month around 30 aloha adult shirts, 30 aloha shirts for children, and the same number of Hawaiian dresses, and lavalavas, bags, and accessories to the neighboring island.

Sea Shell Pink also used to make the uniforms for staff of Japan Airlines and before the pandemic was the official dressmaker of Pacific Development, Inc. and Grandvrio Hotel Saipan. They also made wedding gowns and suits for locally based wedding planners.

Before opening a full-scale boutique, Sea Shell Pink tailoring shop's first location was at Kinpachi Restaurant then it moved to the La Fiesta Mall and Vestcor Village Apartments before relocating to its current home in Garapan.

Sea Shell Pink's new boutique is open from Monday to Friday, 10am-5pm. For more information, call 233-8191.

MARK RABAGO

Sea Shell Pink's new boutique is located on the first floor of the former Bank of Saipan building in Garapan.

Bird flu costs pile up as outbreak enters second year

OMAHA, Neb. (AP)—The ongoing bird flu outbreak has cost the government roughly $661 million and added to consumers' pain at the grocery store after more than 58 million birds were slaughtered to limit the spread of the virus.

In addition to the cost of the government response and rising prices for eggs, chicken and turkey, farmers who raise those animals have easily lost more than $1 billion, said an agricultural economist, though no one has calculated the total cost to the industry yet.

The bad news is that with the outbreak entering its second year and the spring migratory season looming, there is no end in sight. And there is little farmers can do beyond the steps they have already taken to try to keep the virus out.

Unlike past years, the virus that causes highly pathogenic avian influenza found a way to survive through the heat of last summer, leading to a rise in cases reported in the fall.

The outbreak is already more widespread than the last major bird flu outbreak in 2015, but it hasn't proven as costly yet partly because the government and industry applied lessons learned eight years ago.

"The past year has been devastating for the turkey industry as we experience, unequivocally, the worst HPAI (highly pathogenic avian influenza) outbreak in the industry's history," National Turkey Federation spokeswoman Shelby Newman said.

In the current outbreak, 58.4 million birds have been slaughtered on more than 300 commercial farms in 47 states. That is because any time the virus is detected, the entire flock on that farm — which can number in the millions — must be killed to limit the spread of the disease. Only Hawaii, Louisiana and West Virginia have yet to report a case of bird flu. Iowa — the nation's biggest egg producer — leads the nation with nearly 16 million birds slaughtered.

In 2015, about 50 million chickens and turkeys were slaughtered on more than 200 farms in 15 states.

That previous outbreak remains the most expensive animal health disaster in U.S. history. The federal government spent nearly $1 billion to deal with infected birds, clean up barns and compensate farmers. It cost the industry roughly $3 billion as farmers incurred additional costs and lost money when they didn't have any birds on their farms.

UNITED STATES
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

NOTICE OF COUNCIL MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 12, the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities hereby gives notice that it will hold its 4th Quarter General Membership Meeting on February 28, 2023, from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm at the Aqua Resort.

AGENDA

I. Call to Order
II. Roll Call
III. Review & Adoption of the Agenda of February 28, 2023
IV. Review & Adoption of Meeting Minutes of December 29, 2022
V. Reports
  a. Chairman
  b. State Plan Committee Chairperson
  c. Fiscal Committee Chairperson
  d. Executive Director
VI. New Business
  a. April 2023 Autism Awareness Month
  b. May 2023 Mental Health Awareness Month
  c. CNMI-UCEDD Summit – June 2023
VII. Old Business
  a. Family Transition Symposium
  b. Meet Your Policymaker Event
  c. Champions of Equal Opportunity Award Ceremony
  d. March 2023 Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month
VIII. Miscellaneous
IX. Next Meeting
X. Adjournment

Note: Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 13(a) 7, the Council may vote to meet in Executive Session.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend this meeting and require special accommodations are requested to call the Council 5 days in advance at 664-7000. The Public is welcome to submit written or 3 minutes of oral comments regarding the agenda above.

/s/ Concepcion Ulloa
Chairperson

This ad is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award total $274,744 with 100 percent funding by ACL/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

Nation

Jimmy Carter, 39th US president, enters hospice care at home

ATLANTA (AP)—Former President Jimmy Carter, who at 98 years old is the longest-lived American president, has entered home hospice care in Plains, Georgia, a statement from The Carter Center confirmed Saturday.

After a series of short hospital stays, the statement said, Carter "decided to spend his remaining time at home with his family and receive hospice care instead of additional medical intervention."

The statement said the 39th president has the full support of his medical team and family, which "asks for privacy at this time and is grateful for the concern shown by his many admirers."

Carter was a little-known Georgia governor when he began his bid for the presidency ahead of the 1976 election. He went on to defeat then-President Gerald R. Ford, capitalizing as a Washington outsider in the wake of the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal that drove Richard Nixon from office in 1974.

Carter served a single, tumultuous term and was defeated by Republican Ronald Reagan in 1980, a landslide loss that ultimately paved the way for his decades of global advocacy for democracy, public health and human rights via The Carter Center.

The former president and his wife, Rosalynn, 95, opened the center in 1982. His work there garnered a Nobel Peace Prize in 2002.

Jason Carter, the couple's grandson who now chairs The Carter Center governing board, said Saturday in a tweet that he "saw both of my grandparents yesterday. They are at peace and—as always—their home is full of love."

AP

Former President Jimmy Carter reacts as his wife Rosalynn Carter speaks during a reception to celebrate their 75th wedding anniversary, July 10, 2021, in Plains, Ga.

Carter, who has lived most of his life in Plains, traveled extensively into his 80s and early 90s, including annual trips to build homes with Habitat for Humanity and frequent trips abroad as part of the Carter Center's election monitoring and its effort to eradicate the Guinea worm parasite in developing countries. But the former president's health has declined over his 10th decade of life, especially as the coronavirus pandemic limited his public appearances, including at his beloved Maranatha Baptist Church where he taught Sunday School lessons for decades before standing-room-only crowds of visitors.

In August 2015, Carter had a small cancerous mass removed from his liver. The following year, Carter announced that he needed no further treatment, as an experimental drug had eliminated any sign of cancer.

Carter celebrated his most recent birthday in October with family and friends in Plains, the tiny town where he and Rosalynn were born in the years between World War I and the Great Depression.

The Carter Center last year marked 40 years of promoting its human rights agenda.

The Center has been a pioneer of election observation, monitoring at least 113 elections in Africa, Latin America, and Asia since 1989. In perhaps its most widely hailed public health effort, the organization recently announced that only 14 human cases of Guinea worm disease were reported in all of 2021, the result of years of public health campaigns to improve access to safe drinking water in Africa.

Blinken: China's balloon incursion 'must never happen again'

MUNICH (AP)—The top diplomats from the United States and China met on Saturday in the first high-level contact between their countries since the U.S. shot down an alleged Chinese spy balloon two weeks ago, with Secretary of State Antony Blinken sending the message that Beijing's surveillance program had been "exposed to the world."

Blinken and Wang Yi, the Chinese Communist Party's most senior foreign policy official, held the hourlong talks in Munich, where they were attending an international security conference, according to the U.S. State Department.

"I made very clear to him that China sending its surveillance balloon over the United States in violation of our sovereignty, in violation of international law, was unacceptable and must never happen again," Blinken said Saturday in an interview for CBS' "Face the Nation."

His spokesman, Ned Price, said in a statement that Blinken also told the Chinese official that his nation's "high-altitude surveillance balloon program—which has intruded into the airspace of over 40 countries across five continents—has been exposed to the world."

Blinken had canceled a trip to Beijing earlier this month due to the balloon incident, which has become a major issue of contention between the two countries. A meeting at the conference in Germany had been widely anticipated.

Blinken also told Wang that the U.S. does not seek conflict with China, repeating a standard talking point that the Biden administration has provided since it has come into office.

"The United States will compete and will unapologetically stand up for our values and interests, but that we do not want conflict with the PRC and are not looking for a new Cold War," Price said. Blinken "underscored the importance of maintaining diplomatic dialogue and open lines of communication at all times."

In addition to the balloon incident, Price said Blinken had reiterated a warning to China on providing assistance to Russia to help with its war against Ukraine, including assisting Moscow with evading sanctions the West has imposed on Russia.

"I warned China against providing materiel support to Russia," Blinken said in a tweet. "I also emphasized the importance of keeping open lines of communication."

Earlier Saturday, Wang had renewed Beijing's criticism of the United States for shooting down the balloon, arguing that the move did not point to U.S. strength.

Beijing insists the white orb shot down off the Carolina coast on Feb. 4 was just an errant civilian airship used mainly for meteorological research that went off course due to winds and had only limited "self-steering" capabilities.

Wang, the director of the Office of the Central Commission for Foreign Affairs, repeated that insistence in a speech at the conference and accused the U.S. of violating international legal norms in destroying the object with a missile fired from an U.S. fighter jet.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
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Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios, through the Health Care Professions Licensing Board (HCPLB) are hereby giving notice that it will hold its regular monthly board meeting on **Wednesday, February 22, 2023, at 8 a.m.** on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the Administration Building, Governor's Conference Room on Capitol Hill.

AGENDA

I. Meeting Call to Order
II. Determination of Quorum
III. Review and Adoption of Agenda
IV. Review and Adoption of Minutes (01/18/2023)
V. Public Comments
VI. Chairperson's Report
VII. Director's Report
  A. Investigator's Vacant Position
  B. FSMB's 2023 Annual Meeting – May 4-6, 2023 - Minneapolis, Minnesota
    1. Delegate Scholarships – 3 per Member Board (Dateline: March 15, 2023)
VIII. Investigator's Report - None
IX. Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature
  A. Governor's Office
    1. Appointments of Cabinet Members, Agency Directors, and Board Members
  B. Legislature
X. Old Business
  A. Proposed Telehealth and Telemedicine Regulations
  B. Proposed Amendments for § 185-10-2600 - Dentists, Dental Assistants, Dental Hygienists and Dental Therapists
XI. New Business
XII. Pending Applications for Board's Review
  A. New Application
  B. Renewal Application
XIII. Miscellaneous Business
XIV. Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with Counsel on pending or anticipated legal matters.
XV. Announcements
  A. Next Meeting Date
  B. Adjournment of Meeting

ROBERT T. TORRES
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Attorney for Petitioner Cristin S. Duenas Jr.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF JO ANNE SANTOS, Decedent. : **CIVIL ACTION NO. 23-0019** : **NOTICE OF HEARING AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS** : **DATE: MARCH 2, 2023** **TIME: 10:00 A.M.** **JUDGE: Honorable Joseph N. Camacho**

TO: THE GENERAL PUBLIC, ANY HEIRS, CLAIMANTS, OR CREDITORS OF THE LATE JO ANNE SANTOS OR HER ESTATE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that **CRISTIN S. DUENAS JR.** has petitioned the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to issue a Verified Petition to Admit Estate into Probate and Appointment of Administrator for the Estate of Jo Anne Santos the decedent. The proposed Administrator is Cristin S. Duenas Jr. The Attorney for the Petitioner is Robert T. Torres, Attorney at Law, whose address is 5960 Plata Drive P.O. Box 500730, Saipan MP 96950.

The hearing on the Petition is scheduled to be heard on the date and at the time set forth above at the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All interested persons or entities should appear at this hearing. Any and all persons, creditors, or entities having claims against the deceased or his Estate are hereby required by law to file their claims with the Clerk of Court within sixty (60) days of this publication or the claim(s) will be baited. A copy of your claim should also be sent to the attorney for Petitioner, **ROBERT T. TORRES, Attorney at Law**, at the address above indicated.

Dated this 7th day of February 2023.

/s/_____
Clerk of Court/ Deputy Clerk of Court

Sheriff: Gunman kills 6, including ex-wife, in Mississippi

ARKABUTLA, Miss. (AP)—A lone gunman killed six people including his ex-wife and stepfather Friday at multiple locations in a tiny rural community in northern Mississippi, the sheriff said, leaving investigators searching for clues to what motivated the rampage.

Armed with a shotgun and two handguns, 52-year-old Richard Dale Crum, who a family friend said had a history of mental illness, opened fire at about 11 a.m. and killed a man in the driver's seat of a pickup truck parked outside a convenience store in Arkabutla, near the Tennessee state line, Tate County Sheriff Brad Lance said.

Deputies were working the crime scene when a second 911 call alerted authorities to another shooting a few miles away. After arriving at a home, they found a woman, whom the sheriff identified as Crum's ex-wife, shot dead and her current husband wounded.

Lance said deputies caught up with Crum outside his own home and arrested him. Behind the residence they found two handymen slain by gunfire—one in the road, another in an SUV. Inside a neighboring home, they discovered the bodies of Crum's stepfather and his stepfather's sister.

"Everybody has crime, and from time to time we have violent crime, but certainly nothing of this magnitude," Lance said in an interview. He added: "Without being able to say what triggered this, that's the scary part."

Crum, 52, was jailed without bond on a single charge of capital murder, and Lance said investigators were working to bring additional charges. It was not immediately known if Crum had an attorney who could speak on his behalf.

That initial murder charge was for the killing of Chris Eugene Boyce, 59, the man who was shot outside the store. Boyce's brother was in the truck with him at the time and fled, according to the sheriff. Lance added that Crum chased the brother through a wooded area before he escaped unharmed.

Deputy Tate County Coroner Ernie Lentz identified the others killed as Debra Crum, 60; Charles Manuel, 76; John Rorie, 59; George McCain, 73; and Lynda McCain, 78. Lentz also said Boyce was from Lakeland, Florida.

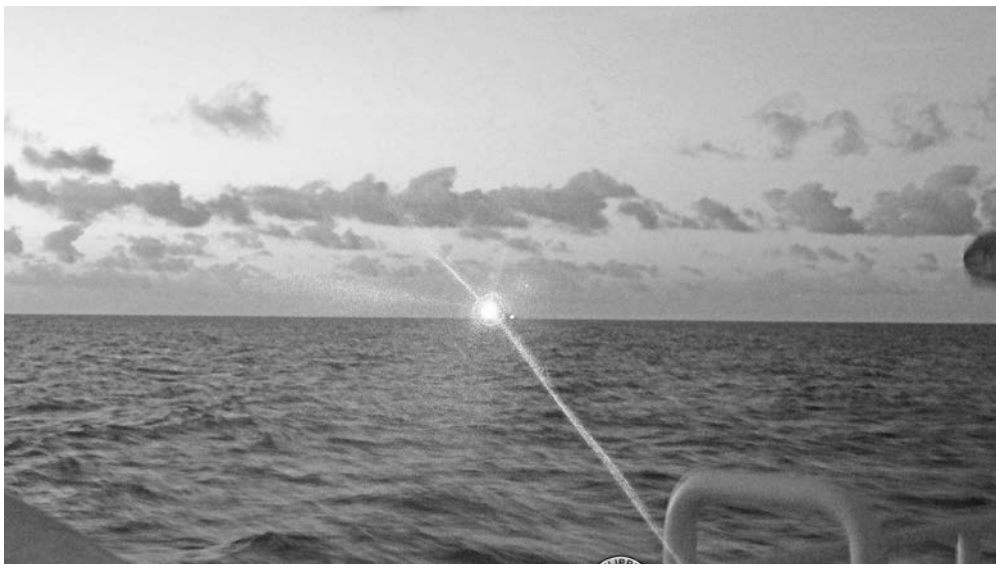
Ethan Cash, who lives near the store, told WREG-TV he heard a gunshot from inside his house.

"I had just woken up and I look back here, and I see dude walking back here with a shotgun," he said.

Cash added that he went to the scene and found one person who had been shot. He checked for a pulse, but found none.

Asia

Marcos: China laser not enough to activate US-PH defense pact



AP

This photo provided by the Philippine Coast Guard shows a green military-grade laser light from a Chinese coast guard ship in the disputed South China Sea, Feb. 6, 2023.

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippine president said Saturday the Chinese coast guard's use of military-grade laser that briefly blinded some of the crew aboard a Philippine patrol vessel in the disputed South China Sea was not enough for him to invoke a mutual defense treaty with the United States, but warned that such aggression should stop.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. told a news conference he also reminded China's ambassador to Manila that escalating aggression and incursions into Philippine waters by Beijing's coast guard, navy and government-backed civilian fishing fleets violate an agreement he struck with Chinese President Xi Jinping last month.

"Despite the fact that it was a military-grade laser that was pointed at our coast guard, I do not think that that is sufficient for it to trigger the Mutual Defense Treaty," Marcos said in his first public remarks about the Feb. 6 incident involving two Chinese and Philippine coast guard vessels near the disputed Second Thomas Shoal.

Responding to a question, Marcos said he was concerned that activating the 1951 treaty would ratchet up regional tensions.

Marcos spoke to reporters in the northern resort city of Baguio where he delivered a speech before cadets and former graduates of the Philippine Military Academy and repeated a vow to defend the country's territory amid a new territorial spat with China.

"This country will not lose one inch of its territory," Marcos said to applause. "We will continue to uphold our territorial integrity and sovereignty in accordance with our constitution and with international law."

"We will work with our neighbors to secure the safety and security of our peoples," Marcos said without elaborating.

Like his predecessor, Rodrigo Duterte, Marcos has taken steps to nurture friendly ties with Beijing. He met Xi in the Chinese capital early last month to boost relations and discuss the Asian neighbors' long-seething territorial disputes in the strategic waterway that also involve Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei.

North Korea fires missile as US, S. Korea prepare for drills

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea on Saturday fired a long-range missile from its capital into the sea off Japan, according to its neighbors, a day after it threatened to take strong measures against South Korea and the U.S. over their joint military exercises.

According to the South Korean and Japanese militaries, the missile was fired on a high angle, apparently to avoid reaching the neighbors' territories, and traveled about 900 kilometers (560 miles) at a maximum altitude of 5,700 kilometers (3,500 miles) during an hourlong flight.

The details were similar to North Korea's Hwasong-17 intercontinental ballistic missile test flight in November, which experts said demonstrated potential to reach the U.S. mainland if fired on a normal trajectory.

Japanese government spokesperson Hirokazu Matsuno said no damage was reported from the missile, which landed within Japan's exclusive economic zone, about 200 kilometers (125 miles) west of Oshima island. Oshima lies off the western coast of the northernmost main island of Hokkaido.

North Korea's Foreign Ministry on Friday threatened with "unprecedently" strong action against its rivals, after South Korea announced a series of military exercises with the United States aimed at sharpening their response to the North's growing threats.

While the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command said the launch did not pose an immediate threat to U.S. personnel, territory, or its allies, the White House National Security Council said it needlessly raises tensions and risks destabilizing the security situation in the region.

"It only demonstrates that the DPRK continues to prioritize its unlawful weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs over the well-being of its people," it said, calling it a "flagrant violation of multiple U.N. Security Council resolutions."

The office of South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said his national security director, Kim Sung-han, presided over an emergency security meeting that accused the North of escalating regional tensions. It denounced North Korea for accelerating its nuclear arms development despite signs of worsening economic problems and food insecurity, saying such actions would bring only tougher international sanctions.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said Tokyo was closely communicating with Washington and Seoul over the launch, which he called "an act of violence that escalates provocation toward the international order."

World

US: Russia committed crimes against humanity

MUNICH (AP)—The United States has determined that Russia has committed crimes against humanity in Ukraine, Vice President Kamala Harris said Saturday, insisting that "justice must be served" to the perpetrators.

Speaking at the Munich Security Conference, Harris said the international community has both a moral and a strategic interest in pursuing those crimes, pointing to a danger of other authoritarian governments taking advantage if international rules are undermined.

"Russian forces have pursued a widespread and systemic attack against a civilian population — gruesome acts of murder, torture, rape, and deportation," Harris said. She also cited "execution-style killings, beatings, and electrocution."

The Biden administration formally determined last March that Russian troops had committed war crimes in Ukraine and said it would work with others to prosecute offenders. A determination of crimes against humanity goes a step further, indicating that attacks against civilians are being carried out in a widespread and systematic manner.

"Russian authorities have forcibly deported hundreds of thousands of people, from Ukraine to Russia, including children," Harris said. "They have cruelly separated children from their families."

She also pointed to the attack in mid-March on a theater in the strategic port city of Mariupol where civilians had been sheltering, which killed hundreds, and to the images of civilians' bodies left on the streets of Bucha after the Russian pullback from the Kyiv area last spring.

Harris said that as a former prosecutor and former head of California's Department of Justice, she knows "the importance of gathering facts and holding them up against the law."

"In the case of Russia's actions in Ukraine, we have examined the evidence, we know the legal standards, and there is no doubt," she said. "These are crimes against humanity."

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who also was attending the Munich conference, said in a statement issued as Harris spoke that "we reserve crimes against humanity determinations for the most egregious crimes."

The new determination underlines the "staggering extent" of suffering inflicted on Ukrainian civilians and "also reflects the deep commitment of the United States to holding members of Russia's forces and other Russian officials accountable for their atrocities," he said.

In an address to his country on Saturday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Kyiv this week had gotten "strong signals from our partners, specific agreements on the inevitability of holding Russia accountable for aggression, for terror against Ukraine and its people."

"Every Russian attack … on every corner of our state will have concrete legal consequences for the terrorist state," Zelenskyy said, citing attacks not just in the past year of war but dating back to 2014, when fighting with Russia-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine first broke out.

Russian envoy claims West is determined to destroy Russia

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—A week before the anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Kremlin's U.N. ambassador claimed that the West is driven by its determination to destroy Russia and declared: "We had no choice other than to defend our country—defend it from you, to defend our identity and our future."

Western ambassadors shot back, accusing Russia of using a Security Council meeting it called on lessons learned from the failure to resolve the conflict between Ukraine and Russian-backed separatists that began in 2014 to justify what France's U.N. Ambassador Nicolas De Riviere called "the unjustifiable" – Russia's invasion of its smaller neighbor on Feb. 24, 2022.

Friday's meeting in the council—the only international venue where Russia regularly faces Ukraine and its Western supporters—put a spotlight on the deep chasm between the warring parties as the conflict moves into its second year with no end in sight, tens of thousands of casualties on both sides, and new military offensives expected.

Russia's U.N. Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia accused Western nations including France and Germany of "holding back" on implementing the Minsk agreements brokered by the two countries to end the conflict between Ukraine and the separatists in Luhansk and Donetsk in the country's mostly Russian-speaking industrial east that flared in April 2014 after Russia's annexation of Crimea.

"You knew very well that the Minsk process for you is just a smoke screen, so as to rearm the Kyiv regime and to prepare it for war against Russia in the name of your geopolitical interest," Nebenzia said.

U.S. deputy ambassador Richard Mills accused Russia of failing to implement "a single commitment it made" in the Minsk agreements while the other signatories—France, Germany, Ukraine and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe—"sought to implement them in good faith."

France's De Riviere said his country and Germany have worked "tirelessly" since 2015 to promote dialogue between parties. "The difficulties encountered in implementing these agreements can never serve as justification or mitigating circumstances for Russia's choice to end the dialogue with violence," he stressed.

De Riviere recalled that exactly a year ago, on Feb. 17, 2022, Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Vershinin reaffirmed to the council that the Minsk agreements were "the only international legal basis" to resolve the conflict in Ukraine, and that rumors of Russian military intervention were unfounded and stemmed from Western paranoia. Four days later, Russia recognized the independence of Donetsk and Luhansk, and on Feb. 24 it invaded Ukraine.

"The one and only lesson to be learned here is that Russia, by attacking Ukraine, has chosen alone, to put an end to dialogue and negotiation," De Riviere said. "It took the decision alone to shatter the Minsk agreements, whose main objective, let us remember, was the reintegration of some regions of Donetsk and Luhansk under full Ukrainian sovereignty, in exchange for broad decentralization."

Health & Fitness

This advertorial is sponsored by Tan Holdings HEALTH IS WEALTH Tan Siu Lin Foundation

MAYO CLINIC Q&A:

5 questions about MRI

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

MRI, or magnetic resonance imaging, is a medical imaging technique that uses a magnetic field and radio waves to create a detailed image of the organs and tissues in the body.

DEAR MAYO CLINIC: I suffered an injury while working out and my primary care physician ordered an X-ray. However, after reviewing the results, my doctor recommended that I have an MRI. I am a very anxious person. Can you explain more about what this type of testing entails and what I can expect?

ANSWER: Understandably, any health care concern can lead to feelings of anxiety and nervousness. Depending upon the situation, your care team may begin with an imaging scan such as X-ray, which is a painless test that gathers images of the structures within the body. If additional information is needed—particularly of the organs or soft tissues in the body—an MRI may be ordered.

MRI, or magnetic resonance imaging, is a medical imaging technique that uses a magnetic field and radio waves to create a detailed image of the organs and tissues in the body.

People often come into an MRI with a lot of misconceptions and just as many questions. Below are the top five questions I answer almost daily. Hopefully this will help bring you a sense of what to expect when undergoing this radiology test.

How long will this take?

MRI exams take longer than X-ray and CT scans. The routine appointment time at Mayo Clinic is 45 minutes, though some exams could take as long as four hours to complete. There are many reasons for this extreme time difference. First, electromagnetism is used to create these images. We can only go as fast as the human body will magnetize. Second, the intention is to create the best imaging possible, which inherently means more time inside the scanner. But the clarity means the radiologists often are able to detect pathology more clearly in our images as opposed to those that come from other facilities.

Why do I have to change my clothes and remove my jewelry?

MRI machines have superconducting magnets that generate heat and create an extremely strong magnetic field, so it is imperative to be safe. The magnets can pull ferrous objects, or those containing iron, into the machine with a large amount of force. This also can cause the machine to rotate and twist with the magnets' flux lines. Nonferrous objects like aluminum or copper will generate heat once inside the scanner, which may cause burns. There have been instances where clothing has been set on fire. To prevent any of these issues, we ask all patients to change into hospital-approved clothing and remove all jewelry and any devices such as cellphones, hearing aids and other items from the body.

My doctor said my implanted device is safe. Why do you need my information?

To ensure the safety of every patient and the technologists, it is important to know if certain devices, such as pacemakers, stimulators, clips or coils, have been implanted inside the body. These devices often have generators or batteries and, thus, require an additional layer of safety to ensure that nothing interferes with the machine, its ability to obtain the most accurate imaging or our ability to keep you safe. When we know that a patient has an implanted device, we must adjust how the scanner operates based on the manufacturer's guidelines. Specifically, we must make sure you can be safely placed within a 1.5-tesla (1.5T) scanner or a 3-tesla (3T) scanner. A tesla is the unit of measure for magnetic strength. MRI scanners at Mayo Clinic are 1.5T, 3T and 7-tesla (7T) in strength. We also must ensure the device is placed in "MRI safe" mode before we begin scanning. If a patient were to enter the MRI environment without all the safety measures being taken it could damage the device or burn or even shock the patient.

What, if any, injections am I going to receive?

During an MRI exam at Mayo Clinic, many patients receive a contrast injection, which is used to help enhance the imaging. The injection typically is given through an IV and does not hurt or burn. Additionally, depending on the exam being performed, some patients may receive an injection of a drug called glucagon, which will help slow the motion within the abdomen so more precise images can be captured.

I am claustrophobic. What happens if I feel unsafe or unwell during an exam?

There is a camera inside the MRI tube so technologists can monitor you. Also, patients wear headphones so they can hear instructions and communicate with the technologists. If you feel unwell or anxious at any time during the exam, you can speak up and staff will work to aid you. Additionally, for some patients, sedation may be available. If you are unable to have the MRI performed, the radiologist and your referring physician will consult with one another and determine if another exam is more appropriate.

Another question I often hear relates to whether it matters which type of facility is visited to obtain an MRI scan. I always encourage people to speak with their health team about the reason for the scan and to seek out the best facilities to perform their imaging. There are different types of scanners, which can vary in terms of the magnet strength used to gather images. At Mayo Clinic, we use 1.5T, 3T and 7T scanners. Depending upon the need of the patient and the part of the body being scanned (i.e., brain, spine, abdomen, knee), a specific scanner may be better suited to accurately view a patient's anatomy and determine a diagnosis.—Fabian Gonzalez, Radiology, Mayo Clinic, Jacksonville, Florida ***(Mayo Clinic News Network)***

Healthy Living

Fit with folate

Low levels of folic acid may be linked to several diseases of aging, including dementia and hearing loss, according to recent research.

Some folate-rich foods

- Brussels sprouts, collard greens, mustard greens, broccoli, spinach, romaine lettuce
- Sunflower seeds, peanuts
- Lentils, black and kidney beans, chickpeas

Source: Harvard Medical School, TNS Photo Service

Is salt sneaking into your diet?

By MARTY VELASCO HAMES
MAYO CLINIC NEWS NETWORK

Too much salt is not good for your health. This is especially true for people who have high blood pressure. Cutting back on how much you reach for the saltshaker is a good start. Dr. Regis Fernandes, a Mayo Clinic cardiologist, says beware of other places salt may be hiding.

Most Americans each too much salt, that's according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Not good, says Dr. Fernandes, when you consider what salt does to your body.

"Salt increases our blood pressure, and high blood pressure is associated with higher cardiovascular risk," says Dr. Fernandes.

He says most Americans consume 3,400 milligrams of salt a day, while the recommended amount is 2,300, the equivalent of 1 teaspoon. It's even lower at 1,500 if you have high blood pressure. And Dr. Fernandes warns most sodium intake doesn't come from the saltshaker.

"Most of the salt we get is from processed foods, from sauces and restaurants and things like that, eating out," Dr. Fernandes says.

Dr. Fernandes says even the slightest drop in salt intake can help lower your blood pressure and improve heart health. He recommends gradually cutting back on salt and always checking food labels.

Life & Style

Bruce Willis has frontotemporal dementia, condition worsens

NEW YORK (AP)—Nearly a year after Bruce Willis' family announced that he would step away from acting after being diagnosed with aphasia, his family says his "condition has progressed."

In a statement posted Thursday, the 67-year-old actor's family said Willis has a more specific diagnosis of frontotemporal dementia.

"While this is painful, it is a relief to finally have a clear diagnosis," the statement read. "FTD is a cruel disease that many of us have never heard of and can strike anyone."

Last March, Willis' family said his aphasia had affected his cognitive abilities. The condition causes loss of the ability to understand or express speech.

In Thursday's statement, his family said communication challenges were just one symptom of frontotemporal dementia.

Willis

The Association for Frontotemporal Degeneration describes FTD as a group of brain disorders caused by degeneration of the frontal and/or temporal lobes of the brain that affects behavior, language and movement. Aphasia can be a symptom of it. The association describes frontotemporal degeneration as "an inevitable decline in functioning," with an average life expectancy of seven to 13 years after the onset of symptoms.

"Today there are no treatments for the disease, a reality that we hope can change in the years ahead," the family's statement read, adding that it can take years to get a proper diagnosis. "As Bruce's condition advances, we hope that any media attention can be focused on shining a light on this disease that needs far more awareness and research."

The statement was posted on the website for the Association for Frontotemporal Degeneration and signed by Willis' wife, Emma Heming Willis, his ex-wife Demi Moore, and his five children, Rumer, Scout, Tallulah, Mabel and Evelyn.

Ryan Seacrest to leave 'Live with Kelly and Ryan' in spring

NEW YORK (AP)—Ryan Seacrest has revealed he's leaving "Live with Kelly and Ryan" this spring, saying he never expected to stay so long and thanking his co-host Kelly Ripa, who he jokingly called his "work wife."

Seacrest

Seacrest ends a six-year run alongside Ripa. His replacement will be Ripa's real-life husband, Mark Consuelos, and a frequent guest host. The show will be rebranded as "Live with Kelly and Mark."

"I'm going to miss my work wife and all the laughter we share," Seacrest wrote on Instagram. "When I signed on to host 'Live' in 2017 it was meant to be for three years, but I loved the job and working with Kelly so much that I extended my time and last year I made the decision to stay on for one more final season."

Seacrest said he'll stay busy shooting the new season of "American Idol," his radio show on KIIS-FM and hosting "Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve."

"Goodbyes are never easy, but we look forward to welcoming Ryan back regularly with open arms. As a fan-favorite guest host for years, Mark is no stranger to the 'Live' family. Having him join the show is so special for us and we're sure that viewers will feel the same," Michael Gelman, executive producer of "Live with Kelly and Ryan," said in a statement.

"Live with Kelly and Ryan" on ABC is the No. 1 daytime talk show per household and in total viewership. Ripa has hosted "Live" since 2001, first with Regis Philbin and later with Michael Strahan.

"I'm so grateful to have spent the last six years beside my dear friend of too many decades to count and will miss starting my days with Ryan," said Ripa in a statement. "Ryan's energy, passion and love for entertainment is one-of-a-kind."

CBS' Gayle King to get Cronkite journalism excellence award

PHOENIX (AP)—"CBS Mornings" co-host Gayle King has been chosen to receive the Walter Cronkite Award for Excellence in Journalism from Arizona State University.

King

The honor is given every year by the university's Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

King is expected to attend a Feb. 21 awards luncheon at the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Phoenix.

She is the 39th recipient of the award. Past honorees include Anderson Cooper, Judy Woodruff and Bob Woodward.

King has been with CBS News since 2011. In recent years, she has earned notice for exclusive interviews with embattled singer R. Kelly and Cherelle Griner, the wife of formerly imprisoned WNBA star Brittney Griner, among others.

Known for her frequent collaborations with close friend Oprah Winfrey, King is an editor-at-large for the Oprah Daily website. She also hosts "Gayle King in the House" on SiriusXM radio.

The Cronkite School, named for the broadcast legend in 1984, focuses on teaching students journalism and multimedia skills. It includes public television station Arizona PBS, considered the largest media outlet globally that is operated by a journalism school.

YouTube CEO steps down, severing longtime ties to Google

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE
AP TECHNOLOGY WRITER

Susan Wojcicki, a longtime Google executive who played a key role in the company's creation, is stepping down as YouTube's CEO after spending the past nine years running the video site that has reshaped entertainment, culture and politics.

In an email to YouTube employees that was shared publicly Thursday, the 54-year-old Wojcicki said she is leaving to "start a new chapter focused on my family, health, and personal projects I'm passionate about." She didn't elaborate on her plans.

Neal Mohan, who has worked closely with Wojcicki for years, will replace her as YouTube's CEO.

Wojcicki

Although she became one of the most respected female executives in the male-dominated tech industry, Wojcicki will also be remembered as Google's first landlord.

Shortly after Google co-founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin incorporated their search engine into a business in 1998, Wojcicki rented the garage of her Menlo Park, California, home to them for $1,700 a month.

Page and Brin—both 25 at the time—continued to refine their search engine in Wojcicki's garage for five months before moving Google into a more formal office and later persuaded their former landlord to come work for their company.

"It would be one of the best decisions of my life," Wojcicki wrote in the announcement of her departure.

In 2006, Google bought Wojcicki's home to serve as a monument to the roots of a company now valued at $1.2 trillion. During Wojcicki's career at Google, Brin became her brother-in-law when he married her sister, Anne, in 2007. Brin and Anne Wojcicki divorced in 2015.

US prosecutors ask for 25 more years in prison for R. Kelly

CHICAGO (AP)—Federal prosecutors Thursday asked a judge to give singer R. Kelly 25 more years in prison for his child pornography and enticement convictions last year in Chicago, which would add to 30 years he recently began serving in a New York case.

R. Kelly

The 56-year-old wouldn't be eligible for release until he was around 100 if the judge agrees both to the 25-year sentence and another government request that Kelly begin serving his Chicago sentence only after the 30-year New York sentence is fully served.

In their sentencing recommendation filed late Thursday in U.S. District Court in Chicago, prosecutors described Kelly's behavior as "sadistic," calling him "a serial sexual predator" with no remorse and who "poses a serious danger to society."

Professionals show concern for woman's safety and life

DEAR ABBY: Regarding "Baffled in Iowa" (Nov. 4), it appears the letter writer's friend may be in danger. As you stated, the man her friend became involved with is "more than a little controlling." At the least, this woman, once located by social services or police, needs a welfare check -- i.e., a serious look at her situation by a well-versed professional familiar with these kinds of situations.

This is just the type of thing that could result in "Baffled's" friend losing her identity and losing all finances to what appears to be a well-heeled con man. One could also envision her being murdered for insurance money. Yes, she is an adult who "has the right to make her own decisions." But, from what we know of this woman, she may not be able to make any of her own decisions and be totally under the control of someone she has known for only a short period.

This woman's situation is more than a little concerning. As a residency-trained, board-certified emergency physician, I've seen similar situations that resulted in identity theft, loss of all assets and even murder. My wife holds a Master of Social Work and has dealt with similar scenarios with clients that resulted in terrible outcomes. We have serious concerns about her friend's physical and emotional safety as well as her financial well-being.

EXPERIENCED IN COLORADO

DEAR EXPERIENCED: Other readers wrote to express the same concerns. They suggested the friend's new "boyfriend" may be a narcissist, sociopath or domestic abuser. They recommended that "Baffled" contact her local Department of Family and Children's Services to report potential elder abuse. Adult Protective Services may also be able to help. And guidance from the National Domestic Violence Hotline (thehotline.org; 800-799-7233) should be sought, because the woman's abrupt major changes—selling her house, moving in with the man, taking out a life insurance policy and ceasing contact with friends—are multiple red flags.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: Some years ago, my ex and I went through a contentious, bitter and prolonged divorce. She's a foreign national, and she returned to her home country a few years afterward. Our son, who is now an adult, soon followed her. I hope to visit him there in a couple of months. My son and my ex expect that I also will visit with her. I do not wish to see her. We are divorced, after all. How do I respectfully let our son know that I do not want to see his mother? And how do I tell the ex?

NOW SINGLE DAD IN WASHINGTON

DEAR NOW SINGLE DAD: Tell your adult son that while you are looking forward to seeing him, considering the circumstances of the divorce, you prefer no contact with his mother. Hopefully, it won't affect his willingness to see you. If it does, however, you will have to decide whether seeing her is a price you are willing to pay to see your son. (And make that "family reunion" short and sweet.)

■■■■

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

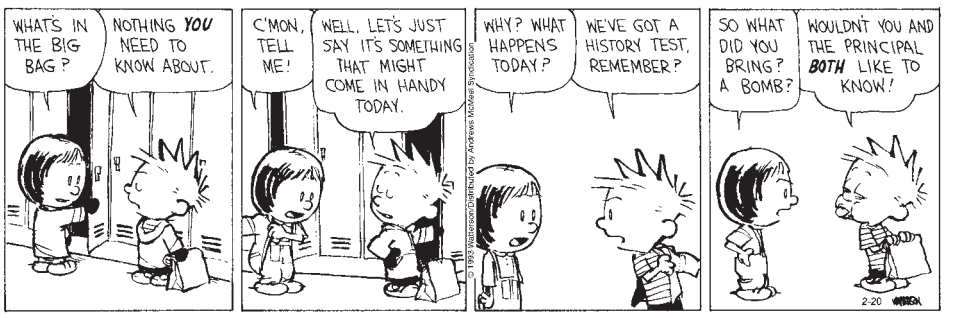
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


WHAT'S IN THE BIG BAG?
NOTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT.
C'MON, TELL ME!
WELL, LET'S JUST SAY IT'S SOMETHING THAT MIGHT COME IN HANDY TODAY.
WHY? WHAT HAPPENS TODAY?
WE'VE GOT A HISTORY TEST, REMEMBER?
SO WHAT DID YOU BRING? A BOMB?
WOULDN'T YOU AND THE PRINCIPAL BOTH LIKE TO KNOW!
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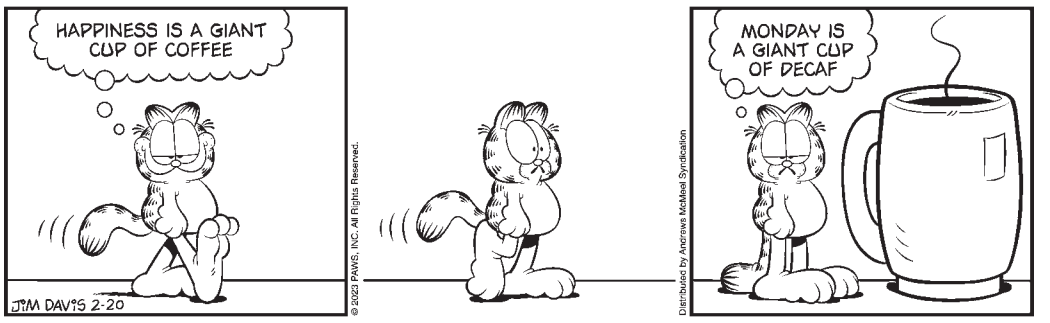
2-20

Garfield®

By Jim Davis


HAPPINESS IS A GIANT CUP OF COFFEE
JIM DAVIS 2-20
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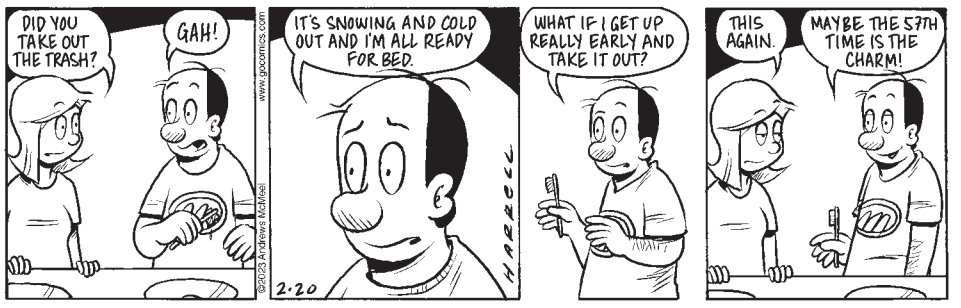
MONDAY IS A GIANT CUP OF DECAF
Distributed by Andrews McMeel Syndication

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


DID YOU TAKE OUT THE TRASH?
GAH!
IT'S SNOWING AND COLD OUT AND I'M ALL READY FOR BED.
WHAT IF I GET UP REALLY EARLY AND TAKE IT OUT?
THIS AGAIN.
MAYBE THE 57TH TIME IS THE CHARM!
www.gocomics.com
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2-20

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

WE'LL BE TRACKING THIS FRONT AS IT DEVELOPS.
OUR WEATHER TEAM IS NOW IN "SUPER STORM MODE."
THAT EXPLAINS THE CAPES AND SPANDEX.
2-20

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Priestly vestments
5 Tavern
8 Evergreens
12 Use a phone
13 Corn spike
14 Human rights lawyer Clooney
15 Stead
16 High standing
18 Open, as a gift
20 Was patient
21 Get ready, briefly
23 "Today" rival, briefly
24 Officiated
28 Longfellow's bell town
31 TV spots
32 Poet Lorde
34 Not 'neath
35 Fiesta food
37 Keep from spoiling
39 Citric beverage
41 Brewer's kiln
42 Building managers
45 Hardly sufficient
49 Charisma
51 "Damn Yankees" role
52 Mellows
53 Scull need
54 Nile bird
55 Small plateau
56 Scale amts.
57 Now, in a memo

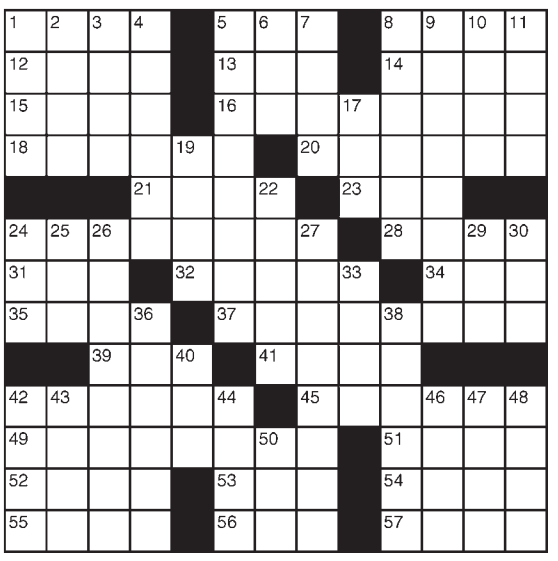
DOWN

1 Advocacy org.
2 Reclined
3 Botched
4 Drinks noisily
5 Enlivened
6 Eg. and Syr., once
7 Cauldron concoction
8 Daughter of Muhammad
9 Copycat
10 Fury
11 Winter coaster
17 Droop
19 Operatic solo
22 Director Almodóvar
24 Bit of butter
25 Vitamin stat
26 Fugitives
27 Fantasts
29 Speed (up)
30 Fury
33 Being, to Brutus
36 Texas city
38 And others, in Latin
40 Before
42 Pesky email
43 Desire
44 Winter blanket
46 Sailors
47 Director Kazan
48 Grate
50 Manx, for one

Solution time: 26 mins.

A	B	C	■	S	H	A	H	■	P	R	A	Y
R	E	O	■	P	E	R	U	■	L	A	N	E
C	A	N	A	R	I	E	S	■	U	N	I	T
O	U	S	T	E	R	■	K	I	T	■	■	■
■	■	■	R	E	S	■	I	S	O	L	D	E
M	A	R	I	S	■	F	E	E	■	A	I	D
A	R	E	A	■	N	O	S	■	L	O	A	D
N	I	A	■	B	E	G	■	M	E	S	S	Y
N	A	R	R	O	W	■	D	O	M	■	■	■
■	■	■	H	O	B	■	I	G	U	E	S	S
J	E	D	I	■	I	N	J	U	R	I	E	S
A	M	E	N	■	E	C	O	L	■	R	E	N
Y	U	L	E	■	S	O	N	S	■	E	D	S

Last Friday's Answer 02/20



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Olivia Rodrigo, 20; Rihanna, 35; Daniella Pineda, 36; Brian Littrell, 48.

Happy Birthday: Plan and prepare before you share your intentions. It's OK to dream, but when you go to explain your next move, refrain from talking to anyone likely to make your life and goals difficult. Your safest defense is organization and a willingness to see matters through to the end. Put differences aside when dealing with loved ones. Your numbers are 4, 11, 14, 27, 34, 37, 44.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Don't feel you have to share too much information. The less you tell others about you or your plans, the easier it will be to get things done on time. Impulsiveness will be your downfall; take the time to position yourself for success. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* You'll get caught up in someone else's problem if you are too accommodating. Back away from anyone sending mixed messages. Put your energy where it counts, and do your best to increase your income. Don't let uncertainty be your downfall. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Be reluctant to participate in something that you don't have full confidence in. Information will save you from making a mistake. Don't misjudge what others can do; concentrate on your skills and execute your plans flawlessly. Reconnect with someone. ✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Look ahead and put a strategy in place that leads to positive change. Reach out to someone you enjoy working alongside, and you'll receive valuable feedback that will financially impact how you continue. Don't trust your heart when dealing with joint ventures. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Be open to trying something new. Speak freely about the changes you want to make, and you'll receive insight into how to fine-tune your plans. Keep your life simple and tailored to suit your needs, and everything else will fall into place. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Network, share your thoughts and focus on people who have something to contribute. A partnership or job opportunity will develop if you are articulate in presenting what you have to offer and willing to compromise to sweeten your offer. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* You'll come up with a great idea that requires you to be open with someone who can make or break your dream. An original, unique presentation will gain interest but lack financial backing. Start small; you'll gain momentum and maintain control. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* If you do what comes naturally, you'll discover a unique way to market what you have to offer. Share your intentions with those you reside with to ensure the changes you want won't be met with opposition. 5 stars

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Trust is earned. Listen, question and decide what's valid before participating in someone's plan. A disagreement will be challenging if someone isn't honest. Do what's best for you, and say no to emotional manipulation. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Refuse to let a friend or relative talk you into something you don't need. Get your responsibilities out of the way, then take time to rejuvenate. Don't take a risk that can result in injury or illness. Change only what's necessary. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* By taking the road that energizes you and concentrating on what makes you happy, you will increase your chance to advance personally, professionally or financially. Pick up the pace and stop worrying about the decisions and changes others make. Personal gain is heading your way. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Price out what something costs before you agree to purchase, invest or sign up for it. Play it safe, do your research and make financial moves that are secure and risk-free. Make stability, getting along with others and creative projects your focus. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are creative, forceful and proud. You are insightful and dedicated.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

6	3	9	4	8	7			5
						4	7	9
		7	1					8
	2							1
	8	1		7	6	5	4	
	5				1	6		
	6	2	7	9				
		3	2				5	6
5		8	3		4		1	7

Difficulty: ★ 2-20

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Friday's Answer

9	2	5	6	8	3	1	7	4
4	1	7	2	5	9	6	8	3
3	6	8	1	7	4	2	5	9
7	4	1	9	2	5	3	6	8
5	9	2	3	6	8	4	1	7
8	3	6	4	1	7	9	2	5
2	5	9	8	3	6	7	4	1
1	7	4	5	9	2	8	3	6
6	8	3	7	4	1	5	9	2

Difficulty: ★★★★ 2-17

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

FAMILY DAY IS A SPECIAL DAY **Solution: 10 letters**

T	N	U	H	R	E	G	N	E	V	A	C	S	G	M
A	O	U	T	D	O	O	R	S	E	L	C	N	U	O
L	I	G	R	A	N	D	P	A	U	N	T	S	A	T
E	T	F	N	G	P	Ⓔ	S	U	P	N	E	C	R	H
N	C	L	E	I	N	A	Ⓚ	P	O	U	D	R	D	E
T	E	O	U	O	B	I	G	Ⓘ	M	E	N	A	I	R
O	F	G	L	R	M	R	T	U	Ⓗ	L	E	P	A	T
O	F	I	A	O	A	C	B	A	T	I	K	B	N	R
H	A	N	V	N	E	L	S	I	K	M	E	O	N	A
S	T	I	D	N	A	I	F	L	G	S	E	O	A	D
O	E	M	N	O	S	A	A	K	L	A	W	K	T	I
T	A	O	T	T	T	U	V	S	T	O	R	Y	U	T
O	C	O	E	H	G	E	R	E	N	N	I	D	R	I
H	H	R	E	H	T	O	R	B	E	A	C	H	E	O
P	I	R	T	D	A	O	R	R	E	U	N	I	O	N

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Affection, Aunt, Beach, Bingo, Brother, Connection, Dinner, Father, Garden, Grandma, Grandpa, Guardian, Hike, Laugh, Mini Golf, Mother, Movie, Museum, Nature, Outdoors, Photo Album, Photoshoot, Reunion, Road Trip, Scavenger Hunt, Scrapbook, Sister, Skating, Smile, Story, Talent, Tapa, Teach, Tradition, Uncle, Value, Walk, Weekend

Last Friday's Answer: Camera

The NEW **Volume 70** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

Mac McClung soars to slam dunk title at All-Star Saturday

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—Mac McClung might have single-handedly restored the shine on a dunk contest that has been widely panned in recent years.

McClung, the 6-foot-2 Philadelphia guard on a two-way contract, defeated New Orleans' Trey Murphy III in the finals of the dunk contest, culminating an NBA All-Star Saturday that may have finally answered the question as to whether what used to be the league's signature event can be glitzy again.

McClung had the answer: Absolutely.

"I'm truly blessed and grateful for the NBA giving me this opportunity," McClung said.

A 540-degree dunk—not a 360, but a 540, him doing one-and-a-half rotations in the air, a move more reserved for figure skaters and skateboarders than basketball players—was his third perfect score of the night out of four dunks. By the time the judges' scores came up it was already decided. Everyone in the building knew he'd already won.

"It's over," McClung said.

It was. And he immediately committed to defending his title at Indianapolis at All-Star Saturday next year.

"If you guys will have me, I'll be back," McClung said.

The final score, not that it mattered, was McClung 100.0, Murphy 98.0.

His is an unbelievable story: McClung has played mostly in the G League, where he ranks 36th in scoring this season at 19 points per game. He was undrafted in 2021 after spending three college seasons at Georgetown and Texas Tech. He was signed by Golden State last year but never played in a regular-season game for the Warriors, and spent a little time on USA Basketball's World Cup qualifying team last year as well.

"Ever since the beginning, I was the underdog," said McClung, who put on a Gate City jersey — his high school and hometown in Virginia, population 1,600 — for the final dunk. "Proving others right instead of others wrong brings a little more satisfaction."

Philadelphia would become his third NBA team, and he hasn't even played for the 76ers yet. He played in one game last season for the Chicago Bulls, one other game for the Los Angeles Lakers.

He has three NBA baskets.

He had four dunks on Saturday night. A guy with more dunks than actual NBA field goals might have saved the dunk contest.

"Give this man his flowers, man," TNT commentator Kenny Smith said.

McClung set the tone for the night with a dunk that had NBA superstars in disbelief — he leaped over two people, took the ball out of the hands of one of them, tapped it on the backboard and then threw down a reverse slam.

And that was just for starters.

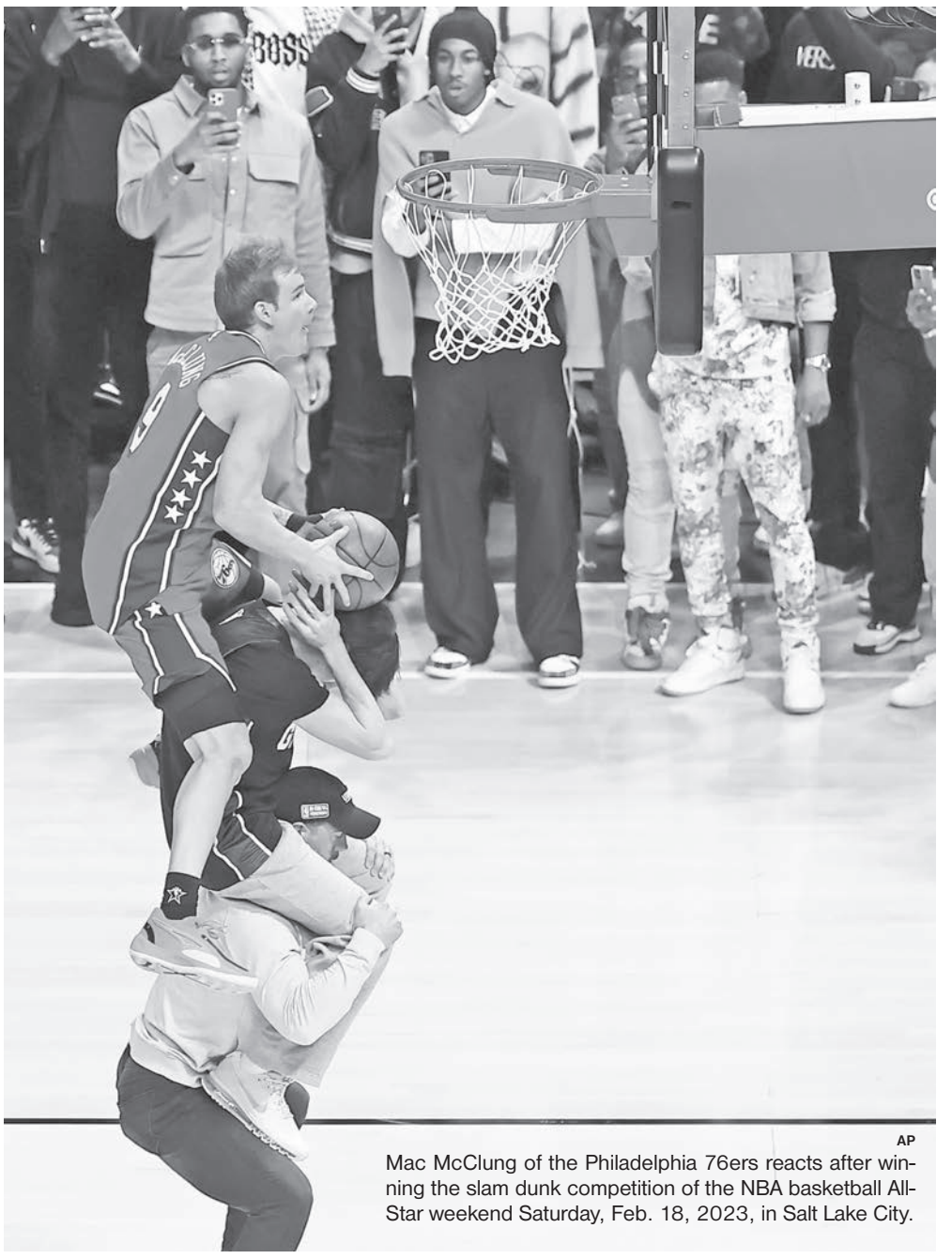
Riding the momentum of that perfect dunk, he wound up hoisting the trophy that was newly renamed for dunking legend—and former 76ers star—Julius "Dr. J" Erving.

"I'm super happy," McClung said.

McClung was nearly perfect on his second dunk as well; four judges gave him a perfect 50, Lisa Leslie gave him a 49 as the only dissenter, but it didn't matter—he was already assured a spot in the final round against Murphy.

New York's Jericho Sims gave himself a 50 on his second dunk, where he attached an envelope to the net, pulled it down after the dunk and displayed "50" to the world. No judge agreed, and his two-dunk score of 95.4 wasn't good enough to make the final round.

Also eliminated after Round 1: Houston's Kenyon Martin Jr., with a score of 93.2.



AP

Mac McClung of the Philadelphia 76ers reacts after winning the slam dunk competition of the NBA basketball All-Star weekend Saturday, Feb. 18, 2023, in Salt Lake City.

3-POINT CONTEST

Damian Lillard represented his school and his brand, doing them both proud.

Lillard, the Portland star, won the 3-point contest by topping Indiana teammates Buddy Hield and Tyrese Haliburton in the final round.

Lillard wore a Weber State jersey with "Dolla" on the back. Weber State is his college; he performs music under the name Dame D.O.L.L.A. And when he got the trophy, he had a Blazers warmup shirt on for that moment.

"They say the third time's the charm," said Lillard, who got his first 3-point title in his third try at the event. "And I'm happy that it happened here. It's a perfect situation. I'm happy that I did it in my home, coming back here to Utah."

Lillard won the final round with 26 points. Hield had 25 and Haliburton scored 17.

Lillard played his college games in Ogden, Utah, about a half-hour outside of Salt Lake City. And the historic ramification of finally getting a 3-point title wasn't lost on him.

"The best shooters in the history of our game, most of them have one of these," Lillard said as he held the trophy. "I just wanted to get it done at least one time. And now I have it, so I can retire from it."

Haliburton won the first round with 31 points. Lillard had 26, and Hield had 23.

Eliminated in the first round were Boston's Jayson Tatum, Utah's Lauri Markkanen, Miami's Tyler Herro, New York's Julius Randle and Sacramento's Kevin Huerter.

SKILLS CHALLENGE

Utah got a win to open All-Star Saturday night.

The Jazz—a roster composed of Utah players Jordan Clarkson, Walker Kessler and Collin Sexton—won the Skills Challenge on Saturday night, prevailing in two of the three competitions.

"It feels good, especially to do it in front of the home team," Sexton said.

The Rooks were second, with Orlando's Paolo Banchero, Detroit's Jaden Ivey and Houston's Jabari Smith Jr. getting 100 points.

"I had a lot of fun just doing that even though we took the L," said Banchero, who was part of the winning squad in Friday's Rising Stars games. "It was really fun getting out there in front of the fans. Skills Challenge, watched that all the time growing up during All-Star Weekend. So being a part of it was great."

The Antetokounmpos were third, with Thanasis Antetokounmpo, Alex Antetokounmpo and Jrue Holiday—a fill-in for injured Milwaukee Bucks teammate Giannis Antetokounmpo—getting shut out.

The Rooks won the team relay for 100 points, after having the best time on a course where teams had to complete a 35-foot outlet pass, do downcourt dribbling, a short jumper, a left corner 3-pointer and then a dunk at the other end.

Next up was the team passing event, won by the Jazz—giving them 100 points—after they were the most accurate in a series of 35-foot outlet passes, 20-foot bounce passes and 25-foot chest passes.

It ended with the Team Shooting event—worth 200 points—with the Jazz prevailing there to clinch the win.

"We did it for Utah, man," Clarkson said.

Gasol, Nowitzki, Parker, Popovich among Hoop Hall finalists

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—Pau Gasol, Dirk Nowitzki, Tony Parker and Gregg Popovich are all one step closer to basketball immortality.

The three international greats—Gasol, Nowitzki and Parker—were among the list of Class of 2023 finalists unveiled Friday by the Basketball Hall of Fame, putting them on the doorstep of enshrinement this summer. Also on that list: Popovich, the winningest coach in NBA history with the San Antonio Spurs, and Dwyane Wade, part of three championship teams with the Miami Heat.

"It's really about the journey," Gasol said. "These type of recognitions, which are an amazing honor, they come along when you do things very, very well for a long time and when you love what you do. I'm just privileged to have played the game for so long, at a high level, with amazing people who taught me so much."

Also making the finalist cut were four selections from the Women's Committee—1990 national player of the year, Olympic champion and world champion Jennifer Azzi; six-time WNBA All-Star and WNBA championship-winning coach Becky Hammon; and longtime coaches Gary Blair and Marian Washington.

The other finalists from the North American Committee include Gene Bess, believed to be the all-time collegiate coaching wins leader with 1,300 to his credit; two-time Division III national champion David Hixon; and seven-time Big Ten coach of the year Gene Keady.

"I love the class. I think this is a loaded class," Hall of Fame Chairman Jerry Colangelo said.

Colangelo said it's unusual for finalists to get this far in their first year on the ballot. Wade, Popovich, Gasol, Parker, Nowitzki and more got this far in their first opportunity.

"The Class of 2023 will be remembered as one of the most distinguished classes the Hall of Fame will ever see, and we are extremely excited for this unparalleled collection of talent and achievement to be one step closer to Springfield," Colangelo said.

Popovich has coached San Antonio to five NBA titles, four of them with Parker as the team's point guard, and led the U.S. to the gold medal at the Tokyo Olympics. The other two legs of the Spurs' Big 3 from that championship era—Tim Duncan and Manu Ginobili—are already Hall of Famers.

Nowitzki is sixth on the NBA's all-time scoring list and led Dallas to the 2011 NBA title as the top moment in his 21-year career, all of it spent with the Mavericks. Gasol won NBA titles and led Spain to a FIBA world championship, and Wade was a 13-time All-Star, Olympic champion and earned membership on the NBA's 75th anniversary team.

Hall of Famers get an orange jacket to commemorate their enshrinement. Wade said he's dreamed of wearing one, noting that he's now "one step closer."

"A young Dwyane Wade never would have thought this moment would be here," Wade said. "Sometimes when you're young and you have a dream, a lot of people don't believe in your dream. It seems so far-fetched. But I've always been a dreamer."

The Hall also announced Friday that longtime high school scout Tom Konchalski will receive the John W. Bunn Lifetime Achievement Award, the highest honor the Hall bestows short of enshrinement. CBS Sports will receive one of the Curt Gowdy media awards handed out this year, with ESPN's Holly Rowe and Marc Spears also now Gowdy recipients.

The Hall class will be announced April 1 at the NCAA men's Final Four in Houston. Enshrinement weekend is August 11 and 12 at Uncasville, Connecticut, and Springfield, Massachusetts.

Same ol' same ol': No progress for Black head coaches in NFL

By PAUL NEWBERRY
AP NATIONAL WRITER

After completing the latest round of coaching hires this week, the NFL won't look much different on the sidelines in 2023.

DeMeco Ryans was the lone Black candidate to land one of the five openings, which means the 32-team league remains stuck at just three Black coaches heading toward a new season for the fifth year in a row.

The NFL also maintained the status quo with six minority head coaches, which includes Miami's Mike McDaniel, who has a Black father and identifies as multiracial.

It remains a stubbornly low number in a league where nearly 57% of the players are Black and more that 69% are minorities, according to the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport at the University of Central Florida.

"It's certainly discouraging," said Richard Lapchick, who heads the institute. "I have no doubt the league is trying to make a push to strengthen its policies ... but the record is the record."

Three Black candidates stand out after all openings from the recently completed season were filled.

—Steve Wilks took over as Carolina's interim coach when Matt Rhule was fired and nearly guided to the Panthers to the playoffs. That wasn't enough to land the full-time job, which went to Frank Reich, a white coach who was fired in the midst of this past season by the Colts. Wilks, who was dumped by Arizona after just one season in his previous head coaching opportunity, is now San Francisco's defensive coordinator.

—Former Miami head coach Brian Flores was among the candidates for the Cardinals' job after the firing of Kliff Kingsbury. But Flores pulled himself out of the mix, instead accepting an offer as Minnesota's defensive coordinator because "it was a great chance for growing." It's not clear if he would have gotten the Arizona job, which instead went to Philadelphia defensive coordinator Jonathan Gannon.

—Kansas City offensive coordinator Eric Bieniemy, who is annually touted as one of the top Black head coaching candidates, was passed over again—even after the Chiefs won their second Super Bowl title in four years. This time, it was even more striking because both coordinators for the team they beat in the big game wound up with head coaching jobs. Philadelphia offensive coordinator Shane Steichen was tapped by the Indianapolis Colts.

AP

Philadelphia Eagles defensive coordinator Jonathan Gannon watches during NFL rookie football minicamp on May 6, 2022, in Philadelphia.

While introducing Gannon at a media event Thursday, Arizona's new general manager, Monti Ossenfort, insisted the team considered a diverse group of candidates.

"It was important for us to cast a wide net and interview a diverse group of people — not only from a race standpoint but also experience," he said. "Ultimately, we had to come up with the fit that we felt was the best for the Arizona Cardinals. That led us to Jonathan."

Ryans became the third straight Black head coach hired by the Houston Texans, but there's a big caveat to that seeming sign of progress. Their last two coaches — David Culley and Lovie Smith — were both dismissed after only one season.

The other opening was in Denver, where the Broncos went with former New Orleans Saints coach Sean Payton.

Over the last five hiring cycles, a total of 33 non-interim jobs opened up around the league. Just five of those went to Black coaches — three of them hired by the Texans.

That group also included Flores, who took over the Dolphins heading into the 2019 season — and was fired just three years later despite two straight winning marks. He has since sued the NFL for discrimination.

The only other Black coach hired during that timeframe was Tampa Bay's Todd Bowles, who took over last March after Bruce Arians unexpectedly retired. Bowles is set to return for his second season with the Bucs despite a disappointing 2022 campaign.

With Ryans, Bowles and longtime Pittsburgh Steelers coach Mike Tomlin set to guide teams next season, the NFL remains at just three Black head coaches — the same number it had at the beginning of the last four seasons.

"To go up and go down, that's normal," Lapchick said. "But it's stagnated at a low point for way too long."

Despite efforts by the NFL to provide more exposure to minority candidates, the owners and front offices seem stubbornly resistant to giving Black coaches a chance.

In fact, the league seems to be going backward—or, at best, stuck in neutral.

"The hiring process in the NFL is like many other industries in that who you know seems to play an important role in who gets hired as a head coach," said Devon Goss, an assistant professor of sociology at Oxford College of Emory University in suburban Atlanta.

"When so many people in leadership positions across the league are white, they are going to disproportionately socialize, network, and therefore hire other white people," she said. "Additionally, as a society, many of the qualities that we associate with leadership, especially in sports, are tied to whiteness, making white coaches appear to be better candidates."

It's a far cry from the 2006 season, when the NFL seemingly had a huge breakthrough. There were seven Black head coaches that year, and two of them met in the Super Bowl for the first time ever.

When Tony Dungy's Indianapolis Colts defeated Smith's Chicago Bears in the title game, minority coaches appeared to be the biggest winners. No one could deny that Black coaches could do the job as well as their white counterparts.

Tomlin took over the Steelers the following season, and went on to lead them to a Super Bowl title, but the league has yet to surpass its high-water mark of seven Black head coaches.

By 2013, there were only three Black coaches a the start of the season. The number climbed back to seven in 2017 and remained at that level to start the following year.

Then, five Black coaches were let go during or after the 2018 season: Cleveland's Hue Jackson, Bowles of the New York Jets, Denver's Vance Joseph, Cincinnati's Marvin Lewis, and Wilks by the Cardinals.

With Flores being the only new Black coach hired for the 2019 season, the overall number dropped to three.

It's been there ever since, not counting interim coaches.

The Rooney Rule, which is supposed to ensure Black coaches at least get an opportunity to interview for open jobs, has largely been a flop. Many minority candidates have received what appear to be nothing more than token interviews, designed to check off a box rather than providing a real shot at a job.

"The Rooney Rule, while well intentioned, has not been effective," said Vince Benigni, a communications professor at the College of Charleston in South Carolina. "Courtesy interviews of black candidates are anything but. Black candidates—usually successful coordinators—who interview and don't receive jobs become skeptical of the process because positions are offered to less qualified coaches."

Art Shell of the Raiders became the first Black head coach in the NFL's modern era in 1989. He remains one of just 21 Black coaches who've held a top job on a non-interim basis.

Tampa Bay is the lone team that's had four Black head coaches, with Bowles preceded by Dungy (1996-2001), Raheem Morris (2009-11) and Smith (2014-15).

Only two other teams—Houston and the Raiders (who twice gave Shell the job)—have hired Black head coaches three times.

Thirteen teams, roughly 40% of the league's franchises, have never had a Black non-interim coach: Atlanta, Baltimore, Buffalo, Carolina, Dallas, Jacksonville, the Los Angeles Rams, New England, New Orleans, the New York Giants, Seattle, Tennessee and Washington.

NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell, speaking last week ahead of the Super Bowl, insisted the league is making progress in providing more access to minority candidates, though he added "we always look to see how we can do better."

He touted an "accelerator program" for introducing teams to a more diverse pool of candidates. He said that initiative led to the Titans hiring the first Black general manager in team history, Ran Carthon.

"We had a number of other programs that we've put in that I think are going to produce long-term results," Goodell added. "Now we all want short-term results, but it's important to have it be sustainable for the future, and we believe diversity makes us stronger."

Maybe so, but most teams seem determined to keep things white on the sideline.

Source: QB Derek Carr meeting with Jets this weekend

By DENNIS WASZAK Jr.
AP PRO FOOTBALL WRITER

Free agent quarterback Derek Carr is meeting with the New York Jets this weekend, according to a person familiar with the situation.

The 31-year-old Carr, who spent his first nine NFL seasons with the Raiders, was released by Las Vegas on Tuesday after he declined to waive the no-trade clause in his contract. Las Vegas needed to trade or release him by Wednesday or $40.4 million of his contract over the next two years would have become fully guaranteed.

The Jets are looking for a veteran quarterback to lead their offense after Zach Wilson struggled mightily after being the No. 2 overall pick in the 2021 draft. Carr is a potential replacement and New York is bringing him in for a visit, the person told The Associated Press on Friday on condition of anonymity because the team didn't announce its plans.

NFL Network first reported Carr will visit with the Jets, who are the second team that the quarterback has met with; he also visited New Orleans shortly before his release.

New York is also expected to be interested in Green Bay's Aaron Rodgers if he is made available. The four-time NFL MVP told "The Pat McAfee Show" earlier this week he was going to spend four days in isolation on a personal retreat and determine whether he wants to continue his playing career.

Carr, the Raiders' second-round pick in 2014, threw 24 touchdown passes with 14 interceptions this season. After struggling late in the season, Carr was benched with two games remaining and acknowledged he was angry about the decision.

He said in a social media post "it breaks my heart" to stay away from the team as the season ended.

"I once said that if I'm not a Raider, I would rather be at home and I meant that, but I never envisioned it ending this way," Carr wrote.

Carr confirmed he wasn't retiring from playing and "that fire burning inside me to win a championship still rages."

The Jets are looking for a quarterback who can team with new offensive coordinator Nathaniel Hackett to jumpstart an offense that was among the NFL's worst during the last two years under Mike LaFleur.

If he signs with New York, Carr would also be reunited with Todd Downing, the former Tennessee Titans offensive coordinator who was recently hired by the Jets as their passing game coordinator. Downing was the Raiders' quarterbacks coach from 2015-16 before serving as offensive coordinator in 2017.

Mantas fastest in long distance outrigger race

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

LEIGH GASES
Saipan Southern High School's girls long distance event team crosses first in the co-ed high school Public School System Interscholastic Outrigger Canoe Race 2022-2023 last Saturday from the course that started at the Kilili Beach to the turnaround point past the Garapan Fishing Base.

It was a test of mental and physical endurance as paddlers of Saipan's three public high schools took on the long distance event of the co-ed high school Public School System Interscholastic Outrigger Canoe Race 2022-2023 on a blazing hot Saturday morning.

Traversing about 6 miles off the waters of Kilili Beach in Susupe to the turning point a little past the Garapan Fishing Base, both girls and boys teams of Saipan Southern High School boasted the fastest time against Marianas High School and Kagman High School.

Despite a slight confusion heading toward the finish line of the course, the Lady Mantas churned the water to first place with a time of 01:02:11.700, handing them 5 solid points for the day, while their boys team reached the finish flag under 1 hour at an impressive 54:16.460 for 5 points as well.

In the girls race, they each channeled their inner Mantas and Dolphins as they started it off strong, with the Ayuyus trailing a little behind. The Dolphins settled for second with a time of 01:03:22.230 while the Ayuyus came in last with 01:09:54.860.

Lady Mantas' team captain Gracie Mendiola, who is a junior and the steerer for the team, said that "going to the turn[ing] point, it was really a fight between us and MHS. I kept calling for power…" Toward the end of the course, the team was confused as to where the finish line was as the spectators on shore were motioning directions, but they got it sorted out and still grabbed first place.

"All of us did really well. Between us and MHS, it was a really hard fight to win. We were in the lead about half a canoe's length," she said.

Mendiola admitted that they are not really the best in the sprint races, so she's really happy that their team won the long distance event.

As to where they got the strength to push through and finish, she said "We've just been practicing together so it was all in the technique. Distance is all a mental game so you have to motivate your team and keep them inspired to make it."

She then said, "I have the best coach, Mr. Joseph Weaver and also Mr. Justin Andrew—they're the best coaches on the island. Thank you."

In the boys race, the Ayuyus paddled to second with a time of 57:06.010, while the Dolphins came in last with a time of 58:03.00.

The Lady Dolphins lead the overall girls division with 21 points, with the Lady Mantas not far behind at 19 points, while the Lady Ayuyus have 5 points.

Meanwhile, the Manta Rays lead the boys division overall with a perfect 25 points, way ahead of the Dolphins 13 points, and the Ayuyus 7.

Northern Marianas National Paddle Sports Federation president Justin Andrew said, "this course was longer than previous courses. Previous courses turned at about the 13 Fishermen Monument. This year, we decided to make the course longer. The kids had plenty of time to train and we knew that they could safely do it."

For this race day, there were no mixed relay events. Next Saturday, Feb. 25, will be the continuation of the girls, boys, and mixed 500m and 1,000m events.

Red Cross Walkathon returns on April 22

The 34th Annual Red Cross Walkathon will take place on April 22 near the Guma Sakman building in Susupe.

The walk will feature a 10K, 5K, and 2K course along the beach pathway.

There will be T-shirts, refreshments, games, and a community fair.

Please mark your calendar and help support the Red Cross and its humanitarian mission here in the CNMI.

The walkathon will also be held on the same day on Rota and Tinian.

The walkathon title sponsor this year is Aetna Insurance. T-shirts have been donated by VANS "OFF THE WALL."

For more information about how to participate, volunteer. or donate, call the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter office at (670) 234-3459. ***(PR)***

TEAM

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This year's teams were randomized and according to the team, it was their first time to actually meet up and race with each other. The team collectively said that it was fun and that everyone carried their own weight. Also, "the energy is higher. When you're running alone, it's a mental battle with yourself, whereas, when there's three of you, you guys are battling it together—so it's much easier with a bunch of people with you," said Pamintuan.

Sawyer, who has been on island for only a month and a half, said for her part, "meeting three new people is a privilege." She said before this race, she joined the American Red Cross Run for the Red 5K and looks forward to joining more races in the future.

Moica, for his part, said that he thought he was the slowest on the team but he tried his best to match their pace, while Sato said that winning first place this time around was great. In last year's Ekiden, Sato's team won first in the noncompetitive division.

Second to them is Racing MATT-ers! consisting of Marjorie Daria, Adam Walsh, Terra Allen, and Tiana Cabrera with a time of 1:51:05.

Third was Lost In Pace, only a few seconds behind with 1:52:01 (Sarah Ashley, Philip Santos, Rosemarie Chisato, and Matthew Furan).

Over the Hills was fourth at 1:56:59 (Gerald Alm, Elizabeth Church, Shigeki Tenorio, and Chong Nam Lee).

Almost Ed's Team came in fifth at 1:57:27 (Kathy Ruszala, Evelyn Pangelinan, Shelia Mabutas, and Rick Bauer).

Mind over Miles placed sixth with 1:57:56 (Robyn Spaeth, Ricky John Santiago, Jessica Ortizo, and Travis Spaeth).

Heart and Soul placed seventh with a time of 2:04:27 (David Hidalgo, Malou Carlos, Tina Ngao, and Simon Necesito).

#TeamJoggernauts came in eighth with 2:08:45 (Pamela Villadores-Walsh, Joshua Castro, Kurt Song Song, and James Abuy).

Last place was Beach Road Streakers with a time of 2:08:36 (Ann Bang, Angela Taflinger, Brad Ruszala, and Chad Taflinger).

Run Saipan president Edward Dela Cruz Jr. said after the race, that he wanted to create a relay race for distance runners based off the Northern Marianas Athletics' Christmas Island Relay race.

When asked who he thought would win the race, he said "I did not expect anyone for first place. When I looked at all the teams that got completely randomly drawn, I was trying to estimate everyone's 5K times a few days ago and I just couldn't figure out who would be first place at all. This was completely random."

He also said that factors of terrain including the construction on Beach Road, residential areas, and potholes, were definitely tough on the runners. "They had to navigate through that tough terrain, especially with low visibility, so it depended on people's judgements on how fast they were going to go. I had no idea who would win first place."

For next year's race, Dela Cruz said that it will go back to 2021's format in which there's a competitive and noncompetitive division. For those who want to compete in the competitive format, the team should consist of two men and two women. There will also be an open and youth division.

He then thanked everybody who lent a helping hand in the race including Northern Marianas Athletics, volunteers of Run Saipan race staff, Triathlon Association of the CNMI, *Saipan Tribune*, *Marianas Variety*, KSPN 2, and the runners.

SNYDER

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93-degree heat. It was intense. All the other runners were super fast so this was a great learning experience and eye-opener into how the top elite runners of the world compete and train. This world championship has inspired me to keep training hard. If you want to be a top athlete, you have to believe in yourself and keep persevering."

"Sildrey and Tania both performed well—especially considering the heat of the course," said NMI national athletics coach Dr. Ron Snyder.

He said the 10K cross country race saw some major extremes, especially for the NMI runners.

"In Tania's race, the heat was blistering and she suffered coming from winter in New York. But she ran it sensibly and came away with a very respectable time. Sildrey would have been much better prepared for the heat but in his race, an Aussie storm came in, dropping the temperature 20 degrees and soaking the course. Because of the severe lightning, they had to finish the race early and clear everyone from the course, rushing us to our cars or to shelter."

Snyder said the race's cancellation was a big disappointment to Veloria who really wanted to finish the race.

"His splits were good and he was well-placed in the field. The heat had been killer so I wanted them both to take advantage of the water on the course. It costs time but is a necessary evil given the dry heat here in Bathurst. We had several days to train in Australia before the race and I was proud of how far they both had come since starting running."

Before his race was canceled, the Northern Marianas College student had a mile pace of 7:49.

"I am proud of them both. This is the first time the CNMI has ever competed in the World Cross Country Championships and the director of competitions from Oceania Athletics told me he was proud of the amount of ex-stadia events we do and we should definitely come back for the next world championships in 2024. Croatia, get ready for the NMI!" said Snyder.

Veloria, for his part, said his storm-shortened race wouldn't take away from the overall great experience he had in Bathurst.

"The course was quite enjoyable. I could not continue because a storm was approaching. I had one more circuit to complete when I was pulled from the race due to the storm. The most difficult aspect of the race is the slope that follows the mud hole since it slows me down significantly," he said, adding that swapping his Run Saipan singlet with a member of the U.S. team was the highlight of his cross country world championship stint.

Results of Snyder's 6K cross country run in the masters division will be published in tomorrow's issue of *Saipan Tribune.*

ISAIAH

From Page 20

last 300 meters," she said.

And that's why the last leg of the 1,500m, Thompson said, was the toughest part of the swim.

"I sprinted up next to Maria and we were neck-and-neck up until the finish. At this point my body was exhausted but I kept telling myself in my head that if I push through the last few meters, then it will all be so worth it in the end."

The Saipan Swim Club stalwart said despite the win, she will continue to train harder to reach her full potential.

"The water was great that morning. The current was not too strong and the conditions were perfect to swim in. My initial thoughts would be how I don't want the win to get to my head in any way. Instead I will only use this experience to drive my motivation going forward in being even more persistent with my training toward whatever events that may be held in the future," she said.

Thompson dedicated her win in the 1,500m swim to SSC and her coach Christian Villacrusis.

"They are the ones who keep me going in practice. We are with each other everyday and continuously push each other in practice, so to see each other excel is a great reward."

In the 50+ division that was specially included as NMISF honored Tan Holdings for its 50th anniversary, Vince Seman, Robert Coates, Boboy Aguilar, Gary De Guzman, Manny Sitchon, Valrich Welch, and Yulia Aleksanko took on the challenge and will be awarded medals by NMISF.

Results of the 50m for U8, 100m for U10, and 500m and 1,000m for open swimmers will be published in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune.*

Mac McClung soars to slam dunk title at All-Star Saturday

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Isaiah, Jinie top Tan Holdings open water swim

Aleksenko

Thompson

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

National swimmers Isaiah Aleksenko and Jinie Kim Thompson sped through the water like dolphins possessed and topped the 1,500m swim of the Tan Holding 50th Anniversary Swim Meet last Saturday in the waters off the Civic Center Beach.

Aleksenko was the first to reach the sand in the longest event of the day in 18:30.21.

The 16-year-old Marianas High School junior was followed in the men's division by Tsunami Saipan Swimming Center teammates Jinnosuke Suzuki and Kean James Pajarillaga with times of 19:01.80 and 20:05.54, respectively.

Aleksenko said he was very satisfied with topping the 1,500m open water swim.

"I was very happy with the results I got during the swim. It was very fun and I enjoyed it. The water was pretty cold and had a little bit of a current but wasn't too bad. I'm dedicating this win to God, my mom, my coach, and my family," he said.

Aleksenko said teammate and fellow national swimmer Suzuki gave him the toughest challenge on the swim.

As for his overall swimming experience in the Saipan lagoon, "I saw a couple of fish but no turtles," he said.

Thompson, for her part, narrowly beat Maria Batallones in the women's race of the 1,500m swim after crossing the finish line in 22:00.17.

Tsunami Saipan swimmers Batallones and Julia Jinang came in second and third with swims of 22:01.63 and 26:06.62, respectively.

The 17-year-old junior at MHS said Batallones actually was ahead of her until the final stretch of the open water swim.

"Me and Maria were not neck-and-neck the entire race. I was behind her for a majority of the race, but began to make my move up during the

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Team Better Than Coffee wins '23 Ekiden

LEIGH GASES

From left, Aaron Pamintuan, Elizabeth Sawyer, Rob Mojica, and Kosuke Sato of Team Better Than Coffee sprints to the finish line first out of nine teams in Run Saipan's '23 Marianas Ekiden Relay race last Saturday in front of the Club Elan parking lot of Hyatt Regency Saipan.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Out of nine teams, Team Better Than Coffee topped the third edition of the Run Saipan's Marianas Ekiden '23 Relay race held last Saturday morning from Micro Beach in Garapan to just before Pacific Islands Club Saipan in San Antonio and back.

Led by team captain Elizabeth Sawyer, along with a strong and speedy lineup of Kosuke Sato, Robert Mojica, and Aaron Pamintuan, they finished the 21-kilometer run in 1:48:36.

Sato, Sawyer, and Mojica ran the first 5K increments of the race before Pamintuan ran the last 6K leg, with his team by his side in the last 1K leading to the finish line.

Pamintuan said that Sato gave the team a good 10-minute lead, "so that was a big help."

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Snyder proud of Tania, Sildrey as NMI makes debut

Tan

By MARK RABAGO
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The CNMI made its debut in the World Athletics Cross Country Championships when Tania Tan and Sildrey Veloria took part in a 10-kilometer run of the 2023 edition of the event in Bathurst, Australia last Saturday.

Tan, the Fordham University track team member, came out 82nd among 90 women participants, while Veloria wasn't able to finish his own 10K race as a brewing storm forced organizers to pull runners midway into the event.

In the end, Tania finished with a time of 44:41 with a mile pace of 7:12 in a race where six athletes collapsed and had to be taken off the court.

The 21-year-old CNMI national athletics team stalwart said the 10K cross country run in Bathurst was the toughest race she's ever been a part of.

"Apparently it was the hardest cross country course ever in history too. The course itself was the most challenging part. It had nearly 800 feet of elevation gain, ran through sand, mud, grass, vineyards, zigzagged through tires as obstacles, and ran in

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Veloria